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* The hon. the PRESIDENT:—"The number of questions of which notice was received during this session was 2,464, admitted and answered 2,197, disallowed 166, withdrawn 56, referred back to Members of the Legislative Council 35, short notice not waived 10 and questions remaining to be answered nil (applause)."

[*Note.*—An asterisk (*) at the commencement of a speech indicates revision by the Member.]

II

MOTIONS ON THE BUDGET FOR 1929-30.

DEMAND XXIX—LABOUR INCLUDING FACTORIES—*cont.*

The hon. the PRESIDENT:—"Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Chetti may continue his speech on Mr. Adinarayana Chetti's motion."

MR. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTI:—"Having regard to the shortness of time before us before we finish the budget demands I wish to place only one or two facts. I was speaking the other day that the Labour Commissioner was making himself conspicuous by his absence and that there was no justification for his absence. I say that anybody who had studied the programme of the railways in regard to the further machinations of the work-shops ought to have anticipated this strike, and as a guide, philosopher and friend studied the grievances of the workmen and negotiated with the Railway authorities for an early settlement before the labourers went on strike. I consider that the duty of the Labour Commissioner is to watch the progress of events in every factory and mill and in every place where there is large employment of labour and to see that the grievances of these workmen are redressed without allowing them to go on strike. With these few words I second the cut motion."

The hon. the PRESIDENT:—"The question is to reduce the allotment of Rs. 47,300 for Commissioner of Labour by Rs. 100."

MR. S. SATYAMURTI:—"Mr. President, I am very thankful to have an opportunity of supporting this cut motion, because last time when I brought in a similar motion under a different rule and Standing Order for condemning the action of the Government for not interfering through their Labour Commissioner with the Railway authorities I had to withdraw it under circumstances beyond my control. My Friends of the Justice party complained that they could not vote with me at that time. . . . An opportunity has come to me again and I hope my Friends in the Justice party will prove their well-known sympathy and concern for the labourers who are all non-Brahmans, by walking into the same lobby with us in this cut motion which is intended to censure the Government and the Labour Commissioner for not interfering with the Railway authorities."

"I want to draw the attention of the House to a communiqué issued by the Government on 31st August 1928 in which they refer to the suggestion made in the press and elsewhere that Government ought to interfere with the Railway authorities. . . ."

* The hon. the PRESIDENT:—"The grant will be put to vote at 12-18 p.m., i.e., 18 minutes after 12, and Mr. Slater is also anxious to speak."

* MR. S. SATYAMURTI:—"Is he? I am very glad. Then, I shall finish my speech within two or three minutes."

[Mr. S. Satyamurti]

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"Sir, the Government say in their communiqué 'it (the critical situation) began from about 29th June and continued till 18th July 1928', so that they had twenty days in the course of which they could have effected a settlement. The President of the Central Committee of the Labour Union suggested to the Agent, arbitration by the Labour Commissioner on four points. The Agent replied accepting the arbitration referred to in the matter of menial wages and the grievances of the remaining staff but pointed out that there could be no change of policy in the matter of reduction. As the arbitration had not been accepted on all the four points, the matter could not be placed before the Central Committee and then the general strike was called for, and therefore the Government simply say: 'At the outset when the Agent was willing to accept arbitration on certain matters the union officials were not prepared to accept.' Therefore, Sir, it comes to this: that the Labour Commissioner was willing to arbitrate if the Agent and the labourers were prepared for an arbitration. If the Agents and the labourers were not in such a happy mood as to agree, was it not the duty of the Labour Commissioner to interfere in the matter and persuade both parties to settle the dispute by arbitration? At the time when the office of Labour Commissioner was created an undertaking was given that the good offices of the Labour Commissioner would be availed of by the employers and the employee whenever labour troubles arose. I suggest that the Labour Commissioner and the Government have neglected their duties in bringing about a settlement which would have avoided a general strike. I am anxious that the House should show its appreciation of the default on the part of the Government by voting for this cut motion. I appeal to my friends of the Justice party to prove their well-known sympathy for labour, as they have uttered more than once, by voting for this motion."

MR. S. H. SLATER:—"Mr. President, under the present criminal law an accused person has, I believe, the right to appear as a witness on his own behalf, if, on the present occasion, I prefer the rôle of a witness to that of an accused—a not uncommon preference—it is because I feel that there is no real desire to attack me as an individual and that a few statements of fact which I am about to make will, to a large extent, dispel the unfavourable criticisms made against me. I do not for a moment question the sincerity of the criticisms which have been made against me, but I do not really feel that they are directed against me as an individual Labour Commissioner. I think rather that hon. Members opposite have given expression to a feeling, which is based on the facts at their disposal, that there has been some failure, some break down in a branch of a machinery of Government. I think it is my duty, in the interests of the department to which I belong and also in the interests of my successors, to state some of the facts which really took place as illustrating the activities of the Labour Commissioner in connexion with this unhappy dispute between the labourers and the South Indian Railway authorities last year. Sir, the hon. Mover of this cut motion has said, I think, that I ought to have rushed to the spot. He was referring to the strike which occurred in July 1928. Sir, I rushed to the spot, to borrow the hon. Member's vigorous phrase, in September 1927, that is, two months after I assumed charge of my present appointment. Even a little before that, I had the opportunity of visiting the headquarters of the South Indian Railway administration and making myself acquainted with the general conditions of the scheme of retrenchment, which subsequently gave rise to

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the unhappy dispute. Well, Sir, when I rushed to the spot in September 1927 I had in the ordinary course of my duties the privilege of meeting a deputation of workers in the workshops at Negapatam and they then put forward the difficulties which they were experiencing in regard to this matter and, to their credit, I must say they showed a very reasonable and temperate attitude. They had my profound sympathy because of the predicament in which they were placed. I think that all of us have always felt that sympathy for them throughout this whole strike. But this, I must say, that the situation which occurred on the South Indian Railway was one which, broadly speaking, could not be avoided. Well, Sir, I had the opportunity of meeting the workers then and listened to what they had to say. I endeavoured, with the knowledge that I then possessed, to make some suggestions. I had continuous correspondence with them subsequently and also with the Agent of the South Indian Railway, and I think that correspondence had some effect on a few points, where suggestions were made to the Railway authorities in the hope that the effects of retrenchment might fall as lightly as possible on the workers.

"That correspondence continued, Sir, for some time, and later—I am speaking from memory—I think it was in January last year the Government of India appointed a Committee. The Government of India appointed a Committee to enquire into all the details of the retrenchment. They enquired into the matter in order to make any further modifications which might help to mitigate hardships. Certainly no Labour Commissioner or any functionary of the Local Government would do more in these matters than the Committee did. The Committee, so to speak, were Labour Commissioners *ad hoc*. After the Committee had made their report, it is quite clear, I think, that the Labour Commissioner could do no more at the time except to encourage the labourers to accept the arrangements which had been made to relieve some of the more acute difficulties from which they were likely to suffer. The Government of India showed, I may say, great solicitude in appointing this Committee which made very careful enquiries in the matter. They made their recommendations and, I think, all possible terms of compromise were reached. I may also mention that the dispute, when it took the form of a strike, involved also certain other railway systems outside this Province—clearly a matter beyond my jurisdiction. I have made this explanation in an attempt to show that the Labour Commissioner exhausted all the resources open to him. I need hardly point out that neither by statute nor by any other recognized authority has the Labour Commissioner or any official any power to determine these disputes.

"I shall take this opportunity of referring to what my hon. Friend, the Member for the University, mentioned—the question of arbitration. Arbitration, as we all know, before its introduction requires the consent of both parties to abide by the award. There was no agreement as to the points which should be referred to the arbitration of the Labour Commissioner. Therefore it was impossible for him to take any steps.

"I think the House will agree with me that, whatever may be the sufferings, in all industrial disputes, of a large body of labourers, the grievances and demands of the labourers are not the only consideration. We must remember the position of the employers who are responsible for the administration of the system which supports so many labourers. I think the House is in sympathy with me on that point. Just before the hon. Member moved

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this cut motion he was eloquently pleading the cause of the employers in connexion with another cut motion; he deprecated the harshness of the Labour Department in prosecuting employers for such little offences as retaining labour beyond legitimate hours and failing to keep the machinery in a condition which will obviate the risk of accidents to the employees. I think, Sir, that he at any rate would agree that the employers' side of the question also should be considered. I do not wish to close with a charge of inconsistency, but I may give one other more pleasing example. The hon. Member denounced me for my heartlessness and my attitude towards the labourers in this regrettable dispute. He said that, even if I escaped now, I would have to answer, on the day of judgment, for the sufferings and hardships inflicted on these people. Sir, an hour or two afterwards, I met him in the lobby and I had the gratification of a very friendly and pleasant conversation with him for a quarter of an hour on these topics. I think I have established the point that there was no personal animus in this matter. And I hope that the statement of facts I have made will help to show what the Labour Commissioner actually did in this connexion and will at least reduce the asperity of the criticisms that have been levelled against my department and the Government in this matter."

* Mr. W. O. WRIGHT:—"Sir, generally speaking, we on this Bench are not enamoured with the idea of the intervention of Government either directly, or indirectly, through the Labour Department, in labour disputes. We do however make an exception in the case of public utility services. We feel, Sir, that the debate on this cut has served a useful purpose; it has elicited a full statement of what the Labour Commissioner and the Labour Department did in connexion with this unfortunate strike. Previously this House knew nothing of the activities of the department at the time of the strike. The Government communiqué of the 31st August last is singularly reticent of what was done by the Labour Department and when the hon. Member for the University put some questions on this matter on the 8th October last no information of what the Labour Department had done was given by the hon. the Home Member. We think that this motion has served a very useful purpose in eliciting a satisfactory statement from the Labour Commissioner, and we suggest the hon. Member might now withdraw his motion, having obtained the information he required."

* The hon. Mr. T. E. MOIR:—"Mr. President, if I add to what had already been stated by the Labour Commissioner himself, it is only because I think that in one respect he has hardly been fair to himself. He might well have said much more of the obvious limitations under which, during those difficult times, he was carrying on his duties as Labour Commissioner. It was suggested by the hon. Mover that the Labour Commissioner had, so to speak, run away to avoid the difficulties which he might have to face. To that, I think, he himself has given sufficient answer. The complaint was that the public did not know where he was and what he was doing. It has not yet, I think, Sir, become the custom of heads of departments to run their own publicity bureaux. They work in silence; they do not advertise themselves and like the Labour Commissioner they are content that they should remain in the background, provided they have the feeling and the satisfaction of knowing that they have done their best. But as I have said, in this particular case the Labour Commissioner was acting under very heavy handicaps and limitations."

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• “If I speak on this subject at all, it is because railways are not a provincial subject. Every Member of this House knows that railways are a central subject. But in so far as latitude is given, one Member of the Local Government has the responsibility laid upon him of dealing with such questions affecting central subjects as may arise and in respect of railways, that responsibility rests with me. As has been pointed out by more than one speaker, the cause of this strike was a certain re-organization in the South Indian Railway Company which was carried out with the consent and approval of the Government of India. With that re-organization the Local Government had no concern. The question as to where a railway workshop should be or whether one railway workshop should be transferred to another place is a question with which the Local Government have nothing to do; and they could not intervene in a matter which was entirely outside their sphere however much they might be concerned within certain limits as to what might happen if and when such re-organization took place. It was not possible for the Labour Commissioner to address or to report to the Government of India as to the technical aspect of the re-organization of a railway workshop. That was a matter with which neither he nor we had anything to do. That fact clearly indicates the very heavy limitations under which he was functioning. As the communiqué issued on 31st August pointed out, there were certain matters on which the Agent of the South Indian Railway Company was prepared to go to arbitration. And I believe I am right in saying that both he and the workers had such confidence in the Labour Commissioner that if any points did come to arbitration, they were both willing to leave them in the Labour Commissioner's hands? But it was impossible for the Labour Commissioner to offer his services for the settlement of points on which both sides had not agreed that arbitration was possible and desirable.

“That such an agreement was partly reached, if it was due to any one, it was largely due to the Labour Commissioner. No possible blame could attach to him that arbitration did not materialise. It was not possible for him to arbitrate on the points which have already been decided by the Government of India and as he has pointed out by means of the committee which they had themselves established for the very purpose. It was not open to him, nor to the Madras Government to go behind the recommendations of that committee and I would deprecate the suggestion that anything that the Labour Commissioner did was otherwise than strictly impartial, or for the charge levelled against him on the Government that they were subservient to the interests of capitalists. The President of the Central Committee of the Labour Union had suggested him as the individual to whom they should go for arbitration. Throughout I say—and I speak with personal knowledge—the Labour Commissioner was in direct and close touch with everything that had happened. He was in touch with the labourers, he was in touch with the Agent, and throughout he was in touch with the Government. He kept us fully informed (Interruption from the Opposition: . . .). I am not here defending the Agent but I am defending the Labour Commissioner against whom this motion is directed. He kept the Government fully informed at every stage. He acted under and according to our instructions and I may say that in no single step which he took had the Government cause to complain against the manner in which the Labour Commissioner carried on his duties under difficult circumstances,

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circumstances for which he was not responsible. I hope the House will accept my assurance when I tell them that he did everything possible within those limitations, by which he was encompassed and that he not only has earned the approbation of the Government but deserves the good will of the House for his conduct in trying and difficult circumstances."

The motion was put to the House and declared lost.

Mr. S. Satyamurti demanded a poll and the House divided thus:—

Ayes.

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| 1. Mr. P. C. Venkatapati Raju. | 13 Mr. C. Venkatarangam Nayudu. |
| 2. „ K. Koti Reddi. | 14. „ A. Ranganatha Mudaliyar. |
| 3. „ R. Srinivasa Ayyangar. | 15. „ Ramanah Goenka. |
| 4. „ Sami Venkatachalam Chetti. | 16. „ K. P. Raman Menon. |
| 5. „ C. V. Venkataramana Ayyangar. | 17. „ C. Obi Reddi. |
| 6. „ S. Satyamurti. | 18. „ P. Bhaktavatsulu Nayudu. |
| 7. „ G. Harisavottama Rao. | 19. Sriman Biswanath Das Mahasayo. |
| 8. Abdul Hameed Khan Sahib Bahadur. | 20. Mr. C. Marudavanam Pillai |
| 9. Mr. K. V. R. Swami. | 21. „ G. N. Muthuranga Mudaliyar. |
| 10. „ D. Narayana Raju. | 22. „ R. Nagan Gowda. |
| 11. „ P. Anjaneyulu. | 23 Rao Bahadur C. S. Ratnasabhapati Mudaliyar. |
| 12. „ A. Parasurama Rao. | |

Noes.

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| 1. The hon. Sir Norman Macjoribanks. | 23. Subadar-Major S. A. Nanjappa Bahadur. |
| 2. „ Khan Bahadur Sir Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur. | 24. Mr. T. M. Narayanaswami Pillai. |
| 3. „ Mr. T. E. Moir. | 25. „ K. Krishnan. |
| 4. „ Diwan Bahadur M. Krishnan Nayar. | 26. Rao Sahib L. C. Guruswami. |
| 5. „ Mr. M. R. Seturatnam Ayyar. | 27. Rao Bahadur O. M. Narayanan Nambudiripad. |
| 6. „ „ S. Muthiah Mudaliyar. | 28. Mr. V. I. Muniswami Pillai. |
| 7. „ „ Dr. P. Subbarayan. | 29. „ S. Venkiah. |
| 8. Dr. (Mrs.) Muthulakshmi Reddi. | 30. Rao Sahib R. Srinivasau. |
| 9. Diwan Bahadur P. Kesava Pillai. | 31. Mr. C. E. Wood. |
| 10. Mr. Hilton Brown. | 32. „ F. H. Wright. |
| 11. „ H. A. Watson. | 33. „ F. E. James. |
| 12. „ C. A. Souther. | 34. „ S. N. Dorai Raja. |
| 13. „ A. McG. C. Tampoe. | 35. „ S. Arpudaswami Udayar. |
| 14. „ C. W. E. Cotton. | 36. The Zamindar of Kallikota. |
| 15. „ V. Ch. John. | 37. Mr. G. R. Premayya. |
| 16. „ M. A. Manikkavelu Nayakar. | 38. Swami A. S. Sahajanandam. |
| 17. „ A. B. Shetty. | 39. Mr. V. Ramjee Rao. |
| 18. „ R. Foulkes. | 40. Diwan Bahadur P. C. Ethirajulu Nayudu. |
| 19. „ P. J. Gnanavaram Pillai. | 41. Khan Bahadur Abdul Razack Sahib Bahadur. |
| 20. Mahmud Sahammad Sahib Bahadur. | 42. Mr. T. M. Moidoo Sahib. |
| 21. Mr. J. Bhemayya. | 43. Rao Bahadur K. Sitarama Reddi. |
| 22. „ S. H. Slater. | 44. Mr. K. Sarabha Reddi. |

Neutral.

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| 1. Diwan Bahadur R. N. Arogyaswami Mudaliyar. | 4. Muhammad Khadir Mohidin Sahib Bahadur. |
| 2. Mr. C. Gopala Menon. | 5. Rao Bahadur B. Muniswami Nayudu. |
| 3. „ B. Ramachandra Reddi. | 6. Kumara Raja of Venkatagiri. |

Ayes 23. Noes 44. Neutral 6.

The motion was lost.

The demand was then put and carried and the grant made.

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DEMAND XXX—CIVIL WORKS (GRANTS-IN-AID).

* The hon. Dr. P. SUBBARAYAN :—“ Mr. President, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I move

‘ that the Government be granted a sum not exceeding Rs. 75,96,000 under Demand XXX—Civil Works—Grants-in-Aid ’.”

* Mr. B. RAMACHANDRA REDDI :—“ Mr. President, Sir, I move

‘ To reduce the allotment of Rs. 74,72,600 for Grants-in-aid by Rs. 100 ’ to suggest the formation of a road fund.

“ Sir, the idea with which I move this token motion is very simple. It has been before the Government for several years past to see how necessary it is and how important it is to develop the rural communications. Towards that, of course, some attempt has been made during the past years by giving a few rupees here and there. Year after year, this small grant is being given on the half-grant system to the taluk boards concerned. The taluk boards which have to develop rural roads have to find the other half and to see that the road is established. There are poor taluk boards and there are also rich taluk boards and the system of giving half-grants is not at all beneficial to those taluk boards which cannot afford to give the other half. It is indeed very hard and the local boards are put to a good deal of difficulty in carrying their programmes through. Having said this, I wish to point out that out of the amount given yearly for the construction of rural roads, some portion of it lapses either on account of the indifference of the taluk boards to spend that money or on account of the time given to these taluk boards being found insufficient. I mean that these funds are usually adjusted in the month of August or September and that during the remaining four or five months of the budget year, no work could be started by these local boards. In those circumstances, it is but fair and also necessary that these lapses must be put an end to and the amount once granted must be carried on to the following year. As a safe method of following this principle I wish to suggest that a rural road fund should be formed and that all lapses should be added to that fund and that every year, apart from the grant that is given ordinarily, some further grant must be placed at the disposal of this fund. You know, Sir, there is a Famine Relief Fund with several lakhs at its disposal. It is also known to everybody that at certain intervals this amount is spent for road construction and that too only when a certain area is declared to be famine-stricken. It is very seldom that the Government take it into their head that a certain area being declared famine-stricken, and then they will have to get up the machinery and put themselves to several difficulties in regard to the work of famine relief. To avoid these things, they generally say that it is not famine-stricken and only when extraordinary conditions prevail, a few rupees from the famine fund are utilized. That is the usual course followed. I would therefore suggest that a portion of this famine relief fund which would in extraordinary circumstances be released for the formation of roads may be transferred to the rural road-fund and that thereby roads would be increased to such an extent that it would satisfy the needs of the rural areas in the presidency. This year I find that a grant of seven lakhs has been made for rural roads and I do not know how much has lapsed last year and how much more is going to lapse next year.

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"The system of half grants is working a great deal of hardship upon the local boards. That system should be forthwith stopped. I also suggest that it may be reduced to a quarter grant from the local boards and the other three-fourths should be met from the Provincial funds. With these few observations, that a permanent road fund should be established, that the lapses should be stopped forthwith and that the grant that should be given from the Government should be increased from half to three-fourths, I request the hon. Minister to make a move to form that road fund."

Mr. C. GOPALA MENON :—"I second it."

Mr. R. NAGAN GOWDA :—"Mr. President, Sir, in supporting the motion of Mr. Ramachandra Reddi, I wish to say that there is absolute necessity for allotting a large amount of money for the construction of rural roads. In this case I want to mention one particular instance of the roads in the wet-land areas of the Bellary district. Sir, the condition of these roads is so very bad that even in summer time it is difficult for carts or even bullocks to pass. I therefore feel that there is a great need for the allotment of a large sum of money for these rural roads."

* Rao Bahadur B. MUNISWAMI NAYUDU :—"Sir, this is a subject on which I have talked more than once in this session. I have mentioned on the occasion of the debate on the cut motion with regard to the improvement of village sanitation how important the question of village communication is. I am glad, Sir, that the Government is already making a move in that direction by constituting a village road fund. I would only add that with regard to those proposals certain points might be considered. First, Sir, as I have stated, there must be continuity in the policy of the Government with regard to the grant for communication in the villages. It is not enough to say that, having regard to a particular year's provincial finances, the Government will be able to give 5 or 7 lakhs. They should go further and say that when they have got large surpluses a large portion of it should be earmarked for the purpose so that in the course of a few years, say five years, the amount may be utilized with advantage. It has been stated that the district and taluk boards have not been able to utilize the last year's grant and that there have been lapses. I need not bring to the notice of the Government that the blame is not entirely with the local boards. The blame lies as much with the Government as with local boards. If only district boards or taluk boards knew that what the Government would give would not be less than what is necessary for their programme, they would certainly take steps to see that the works are started and taken in right time. We do not really know what amount will be given by the time the work is started and we could not spend because the season is over. I submit that that kind of uncertainty must be removed. The second point I suggest is that if really we should have as an ideal that every village must have a road connecting it with the main road or nearest market, then much more than 7 lakhs a year is necessary and we could not do it except by gradually earmarking a large portion of the surplus we have for the purpose of the village road fund so that apart from future possibility of getting grant from the general revenue we could utilize this surplus. I suggested that 50 lakhs out of the 2 crores of surplus might be allotted so that in course of time we could do much to improve the sanitary condition of the villages. Even three times 50 lakhs would not be too much if we wish to see that all the villages are provided with communications. Sir, after all, as I said,

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crores of rupees represents but a balance of surplus in the hands of the Government raised mainly from the agriculturists for which the Government have absolutely no need at present. They propose to give 2 out of 4 crores to repay the old debt and the other two crores are still with them. Is it too much to ask that those 2 crores should be earmarked for rural development which would include not merely opening of communications but also making sanitary and economic improvement of the villages? Another point that I wish to add is the system of insisting upon local bodies to provide half the amount before they could get the other half as grant from the Government. Sir, it is true that when people are enthusiastic and local bodies are asked to find the other half, they somehow find it. But do the Government realize that in financing the other half the local bodies starve the other necessary services. After all they have to starve sanitation, health activities, etc. If only we institute a comparison between the amount spent in 1913-14 and 1927-28 between the various services in the local bodies, we find that the increased cost on roads works out to about $2\frac{1}{2}$ times between these years. It is now 114 lakhs for communications. In 1913-14, it was about 40 lakhs. With regard to public health service, the figures are almost stationary, 20 lakhs in 1913-14 and about the same in 1927-28. So, if there has been any improvement in village communications, it is not on account of the capacity to contribute on the part of local boards, but at the sacrifice of the public health of the people. I request the Government, in future, not to insist upon one-half anticipation. Punjab is not considered to be a very advanced province. But we have only to go to Punjab to see in what way the Government have taken steps to improve the condition of the people. We find, Sir, they have a very big programme of road works. We find that in the last ten years they have increased by more than 200 per cent their expenditure on roads and we find there what is called the Communications Board constituted by the Punjab Government to which all allotments for the improvement of roads have to be made. There are no lapses there. Even if it happens, it does not lapse to the Provincial funds, but to the road fund to be given to the villages later on. We find that the Royal Commission on Agriculture refer to this and say :

'In the Punjab the Communications Board has offered a two-thirds grant-in-aid to any district board which submits a programme for improving village roads in a group of villages.'

"So, Sir, in Punjab, the contribution is two-thirds, while our contribution is only a half. So, Sir, are we not reasonable in asking the Government not to insist upon 50 per cent contribution? We do not ask for the whole of it. I, therefore, submit that a more generous contribution may be made in addition to anything that may come from local bodies Fund and also contributions need not be demanded from poor local bodies. Sir, I need not say more on this point except to express the hope that this question will receive the most careful attention at the hands of the Government as early as possible."

* Mr. V. I. MUNISWAMI PILLAI:—"I may say at the outset that the improvement of village communications improves the riches of the country. Sir, coming as I do from the Nilgiris for many years, the village communications were neglected and just after the arrival of His Excellency Lord Goschen and after a deputation from the district board a special grant of Rs. 15,000 was made and the district board was able to improve certain

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portion of the roads. But it is not enough. Even last year, I know the hon. the Chief Minister made certain contributions on the amount that was collected by the District Board itself. This year, during the discussion of the Budget, many Members that have come from the rural parts pressed the point for more improvement and addition to the rural communication. One of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Agriculture was to improve the road communications but it was pointed out that for want of funds they could not be given effect to. So, I am sure, the hon. the Chief Minister will see his way to find a scheme whereby a Road Committee may be formed for the improvement of rural communication. Coming to the question of the depressed classes, Sir, we are very badly off without proper communication. To improve the lot of the depressed classes this is one of the vital points, that must be gone into. Now, as it is, at the times of epidemics, our people find a great deal of inconvenience to go to the dispensaries that lie miles away. A few months back, myself and another Member of the depressed classes of this Council had to visit a place known as Pimathoor in South Arcot district and it was on a rainy day. The so-called village communication, that is, the road itself was full of flood and the bandy in which we had to go was about to be drowned. Such is the state of affairs in the villages and I am sure the Government will take steps to improve the village communications."

Sriman BISWANATH DAS Mahasayo :—" Mr. President, Sir, after the introduction of the Reforms and the reformed Local Boards Act, a classification was made by the Government of the roads into four classes. That is, first-class roads (trunk roads), the second-class roads, third-class roads and the village roads. Sir, under this classification, the Government is bound to maintain the first-class roads, that is, trunk roads, they being Military roads."

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" I wish to know whether Mr. Muniswami Nayudu wishes to move the next motion."

Rao Bahadur B. MUNISWAMI NAYUDU :—" Yes, Sir."

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" In that case Mr. Biswanath Das will do well to come to the road-fund."

Sriman BISWANATH DAS Mahasayo :—" My idea was whether the second and third-class roads . . ."

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" It is better to confine ourself to the constitution of the road-fund."

* Mr. S. ARPUDASWAMI UDAYAR :—" Mr. President, Sir, I wish to support the idea of the formation of a rural road-fund and I think the hon. Minister is already or soon will be taking steps to have something very much like it. At the same time, Sir, I must draw the attention of this House to what is a fact to me that the presidents of district boards are not really keen on the improvement of village communications. My friends shake their heads. I know some of them are very good. They may be model presidents of district boards. But, to my purpose, I may give one single instance, Sir. For the last six or seven years I have been trying to bring about improvement in rural communications in villages round about Solagampet. I will take the Tanjore Taluk Board. There are nearly twenty or rather thirty villages that have not even decent cart-tracks not to boast of roads. This

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means that except for about three months in the year, that is, except during the hot weather, for the rest of the year the villages are completely shut off from the outside world. Then, Sir, it must be borne in mind that in the absence of communications leading to the trunk roads connecting villages with Tanjore and Trichinopoly, the economic condition of ryots in these unfortunate villages cannot be improved.

"With regard to the construction of two or three village roads which I deemed indispensable I have tried my very best to bring pressure on the board and upon the various members of the board but with no result. Difficulties are raised; and even now some friends behind me are raising the cry 'where is the money?' It is precisely for money, for more money we are all clamouring. Whenever a proposal for roads is put forward, up comes the cold excuse of want of funds; 'We have so many small channels to be tunnelled or bridged; for those works we required more money, when such engineering difficulties confront us, we have to wait. Why not these pressing needs be postponed till we get sufficient money'—this is the argument that is put forward. Sir, the argument, is clear: We must have more money: At the same time we must have a systematic way of utilizing that money when available and also some real enthusiasm on the part of the members of the district and taluk boards, to promote the welfare of the villagers by means of roads or improved communications. Personally speaking, I too have suffered terrible losses due to the bad condition, and absence of roads. I have known cases where for seven or eight months the ryot is not able to bring to the land the manure he needs, or take the produce from one place to another in search of a good market, on account of the bad state of cart-tracks. If therefore effect is to be given to the recommendations of the Royal Agricultural Commission, i.e., to this portion, namely, of having better village communications it is very desirable that the Minister should come forward with his programme, for the creation of a rural road-fund, and with liberal grants. He should also lay down the manner in which this grant is to be utilized, state the amount that will be annually allotted so that as many villages as possible may have their communications improved, and thus redress some of the grievances of the poor agriculturists."

* Mr. A. PARASURAMA RAO :—"Mr. President, Sir, I fully endorse the remarks of the hon. Members who spoke on this cut motion. The people were given to understand at the time when the cess was levied for the first time, that it was a road-cess and from what happened subsequently the villagers have come to understand it as a thorough misnomer; for it is now used for purposes entirely different for which a road-cess is being levied. Now, as has been proposed if a road-fund is formed I daresay the idea could be eminently realized and whenever there is an opportunity for giving grants for purposes of making village roads better this fund might be utilized, so that the people may understand that there is always a store from which they could draw by moving the machinery. At the same time I would request the hon. the Minister to observe the difference in the matter of allocating because the principle now obtaining is working great hardship. Particularly when you take into consideration the normal income of any local board and the normal expenditure, which are absolutely necessary to meet the services, then there will be very little left for expenditure upon this item of road-making, as also of village road-making. Some how or other on account of the advent of motor traffic the bulk, the lion's share of this grant, is spent

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upon important roads to make them convenient for motor traffic. This is another difficulty, and as a result of this the village roads suffer. Thus these go to show that the villages are in every possible way neglected. And the only request that we make by this motion to the hon. the Minister is to form a definite village road fund so that it may be available at any time."

(At this stage the hon. the Deputy President took the Chair.)

* Mr. K. KOTI REDDI :—" Madam, Deputy President, I do not know whether we are discussing only the question of improving the rural communications, as many members have been touching on that point. I believe it is more than that. This formation of road fund, of which so much has been said by hon. Members is just the thing that is required now ; because there are many urgent things to be developed in connexion with the villages. So far as the trunk roads and the second-class roads are concerned they are not in such urgent need of repair and extension as the roads of the villages are. The House must remember that the major portion of the revenue is from the villages. One of the recommendations of the Royal Agricultural Commission is development of communications. There could be no dispute about the importance that we have to attach in future to the development of rural medical relief. And unless rural communications are developed it is almost impossible to take advantage of dispensaries, practically the recently formed divisional surgical centres. These divisional surgical centres are intended to give facilities to the rural population to resort to them whenever medical assistance is necessary. And unless you provide them with decent roads it is almost impossible for them to take advantage of these. Patients who are in a very bad state of health cannot be expected to travel in bad roads ; much worse where there are no roads. So more attention should be devoted to the development of rural communications. Now that we have a very decent balance of our revenues, I hope with the unanimous expression of opinion of all parties in this House it will be possible to form a road fund which can be utilized for the development of roads, especially village roads. I hope the hon. Finance Member will set apart at least a crore of rupees for that purpose."

* The hon. Dr. P. SUBBARAYAN :—" Madam, Deputy President, when Mr. Ramachandra Reddi put down this cut motion I wondered what he meant by road development fund. Perhaps he is not aware of the fact that there is no such thing as road development fund in Europe. As a matter of fact the roads committee itself says that the road development fund is not necessary in this country. From the speeches I see what he is referring to is the rural development fund and not mere road fund. I know hon. Members opposite and behind are very keen on the question of rural development fund ; and Mr. Muniswami Nayudu suggests that the whole sum of two crores in the grant should be granted to constitute this fund. And I am afraid that will not be possible. (A voice : Why not ? Is it your money ?) It is not a question of your money or my money. You are to consider how the different wants of different people are to be satisfied. And after all road communications are not the only things that are going to benefit the people. At the same time I admit that good roads are very important, especially in bringing the villages together, take for example the rural surgical centre ; these rural surgical centres will not be of much use unless there are communications, so that people can come to the centre ; or the person in charge of the centre may go out to the places round it. The same thing

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applies to the question of concentration of higher elementary schools in a particular locality of a taluk. Thus I quite understand the importance of rural communications : and people have suggested the formation of a rural development fund, so that should any lapses occur they may not go to the provincial budget but to the rural development fund. As I said more than once the lapses have not gone into the general renewals. What has happened is that more than one district have not been able to utilize the money allotted to them. And in the Nellore District Board there are lapses. (A voice : Mr. Ramachandra Reddi is not responsible for it.) (Laughter.)

"I cannot say who is responsible. This Board got as their share a lakh and eighteen thousand rupees last year. This year we have given these lapsed grants to boards who are able to take it; and both Chittoor and Tinnevely have got such amounts. I hope other district boards also will be equally alert. Thus we have very little to constitute this rural development fund. As I have said I cannot really commit myself to give two crores or even one crore or even a definite sum for the simple reason that the whole provision will have to be gone into by myself in conjunction with the hon. the Finance Member, so that a definite policy might be formulated. As soon as a settlement is arrived at with the local self-government advisory committee with regard to this rural development fund I shall see that a substantial move forward is made on this question of rural communication."

* Mr. P. C. VENKATAPATI RAJU :—"Madam, I am sorry to say that the 1 p.m.
reply of the hon. the Chief Minister in regard to this question is, as usual, unsatisfactory. He said that it was a question which would have to be considered from the point of view of finance in consultation with the hon. the Finance Member. The question of rural uplift and the communications in the villages has been engaging the attention of this House not now for the first time, but all through the life of this Council. I can say that in the matter of the improvement of rural parts of the country the opinion of the whole House is more or less unanimous. Even as he was observing, the hon. the Chief Minister knows that even the Members behind his back who have been supporting him in other matters, when it comes to the question of improvement of the lot of villagers, they will be found to be against him. When such is the case, I do not see why, in view of the fact that the cut has been given notice of for such a long time, he did not consult the hon. the Finance Member, bring up this matter before the Cabinet if necessary and come to some conclusion and intimate to the House that they are going to constitute a rural development fund with such and such an amount and that they are going to come before this House for a supplementary demand in the near future.

"With regard to the system that is now followed about the giving of these grants at the last moment without really understanding the time when they will be able to spend the grants that is the real cause for so many lapses. It is the want of time for spending these amounts within the financial year that is responsible. Even in the matter of the distribution of these grants, no particular care is being taken to see that grants are given to the boards that are in a position to carry out the works for the amounts granted. If hon. Members like the hon. Member for Chittoor were to ask in this House for larger grants and impress upon the hon. the Chief Minister, he will be getting those amounts; but there are many cases where the presidents of district boards cannot undertake the work on account of their financial position, and

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there are many district boards which, apart from their finances, are not in a position to develop these village communications. And in the matter of making these grants the Government ought to have taken proper care to see that the case of villages in which communications are not attended to by the boards on account of want of their own finances, is taken into consideration first and adequate provision made for them. With regard to the problem of improving village communications, and other matters, such as education, sanitation and economic condition of villages, it will be admitted by all that such an important item of expenditure ought to be taken up by the Government as one of their first duties. It is deplorable that they should be neglected for such a long time and that after an administration of about 150 years many villages cannot have any communication for about six or seven months in the year, is highly deplorable. It is no wonder that many executive officers find it impossible to go to many of these villages and even visit the country parts. It will be impossible to go there because even the ordinary country cart track is not available for traffic for some of these villages. And the plight of these villages can only be imagined when they are cut-off from all outside civilization for about eight months in the year. Under these circumstances, the hon. the Chief Minister should assure the House that he is in earnest in this matter, that he has already convinced his colleagues in the Cabinet, that he has induced the hon. the Finance Member to devote if not the whole, at least half, of the amounts that are now lying in his hands for this purpose. I hope the hon. the Finance Member will give us more definite information with regard to the matter of the amount that will be provided for this object, as he knows that the wish of his own colleagues is for making the amount as big as possible."

MR. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—"Madam, Deputy President, I should very much like that this House examined the implications of the hon. the Chief Minister's reply. All that he has said amounts to this. There have been grants which have lapsed. The Government has been willing to allow those lapsed grants to be treated as grants made afresh. To-day we are proposing to have what is called a rural development fund, and in it we shall put these funds. What has been carried on as a policy for sometime we shall legalise by calling it with a different name. If that is any satisfaction to this House, we may well be satisfied. But the hon. the Chief Minister did not quite realize the import of the suggestion that was made and the pleading that was put for the allocation of the two crores of rupees that now form the balances for the development of rural areas. He has very little to do with the villages really and therefore probably he does not realize the exact difficulties of our people. I had a very sad experience when I was working during the cholera season. There is a big populous village within seven miles of Nandyal that is well-equipped for purposes of medical relief. We had undertaken to help these villagers by going to them, examining such of them as were available at the time and giving them relief to the extent to which it was possible for an itinerant party to give relief. We started out, and there was a heavy downpour of rain. The motor could not move, the jutka could not move and there was no road and no proper communication. The people were lying quite helpless and no help could be rendered to any of them. That is the situation that arises in these villages. And during epidemics, more especially, there is the gravest trouble and the people of the villages suffer most. And therefore before any measure of amelioration is thought of, it appears essential that communications should be put in a better condition.

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And for that purpose a vigorous policy has to be pursued. A let alone policy, a policy that relies upon what has hitherto merely happened is not enough for the purpose of satisfying the rural needs in our country. A definite step forward has to be taken and if the hon. Minister for Local Self-Government believes in himself, it is up to him to stand up and say, as he should have said, that he would do his best to wring money out of the Finance Member. I know there would be many difficulties and that is due to the system of Government which our friends have agreed to work. Therefore difficulties should not have stood in their way to the extent to which they might have stood in the way of people who did not understand their own position before they took it up. It is open to the hon. the Minister to put back all the money that has been taken out of the rural areas into those rural areas alone. It cannot be contended that the excess of money that is now lying with the Government has come out of any other source except from the ordinary cultivator. In this country it is the rural area that supports every one up to the administrator or the legislator or the trader, the capitalistic magnate or the Minister sitting on the Treasury bench. Even the income-tax that the Governors of Provinces pay comes out of the rural areas. Nothing is produced, nothing material is produced."

The hon. Mr. T. E. MOIR :—"The Provincial Governments take no income-tax out of the rural areas."

MR. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—"I am afraid my hon. Friend the Finance Member administers income-tax as an agent of the Government of India, and a portion of the income-tax comes into his treasury also."

The hon. Mr. T. E. MOIR :—"We are not agents to the Government of India in income-tax matters now."

MR. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—"Whatever it is, I was mentioning this fact that even income-tax, even that centralized revenue comes from the lowliest of the rural population and therefore it is but right that what has been taken out of the rural population should be returned to it for a purpose which is most essential for the development of rural areas. When we raise the question of water-supply, the reply is 'there is no finance'. When we raise the question of communications the answer is 'there is no finance'. When we raise the question of medical aid, the answer is 'there is no finance'. Therefore the sum total of the effect of administration of this country appears to be that whatever money may be in the hands of the Government it should always be spent at the sweet will and pleasure of the bureaucrats that administer the country and the Ministers who co-operate with them, but not for the interests of the rural areas that really produced this money. Time has come when the hon. Minister should carefully ponder over the question, and understand the significance of what he himself has stated. He has stated that there is a necessity but all the same he comes forward and states that he cannot undertake to get either two crores or one crore or any substantial amount for the matter of that. He was not prepared to say what he has in his mind as to the possibilities of getting a portion of that money which is with the Government for purposes of rural emancipation. It is all very well to talk of high sounding names. To tell us that he is thinking of a rural development fund is merely to tell us that he has coined a phrase for things that already exist. It does not mean either the infusion of a new spirit or a departure in policy. What this Council asks is whether the hon. Minister is prepared to depart from the

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usual routine of his policy and work up a new line, whether he is courageous enough to stand up for the rights of the rural areas and allocate funds for the rural areas as against other interests, and whether he is able to influence the Government to do all that he considers necessary for the rural areas. Without giving us answers to questions raised here, he has merely given us the skeleton of a scheme that he desires the Government to adopt. Beyond that, no satisfaction has been given to this House in regard to this cut. Therefore I have great pleasure, Madam, Deputy President, in supporting this cut motion."

Mr. P. ANJANEYULU :—" Madam, Deputy President, this subject is one of the tender annuals that is year after year placed before this House. Loud speeches are made that the subject would be carefully considered and yet the subject is carelessly brushed aside. Every one in this House is interested in rural reconstruction especially in village communications. This reminds me, Madam, of a small couplet which I was quoting for a different purpose sometime ago: A mathematics professor when ill, wanted a dose of medicine for him to sleep. A dose was given him the previous night, and in the next morning, a student asked the professor how he felt the previous night. The professor replied: 'The medicine I had, but sleep I had none'. It had all its effects but the desired one. Even so, we have listened very carefully to the very interesting speech of the hon. the Chief Minister. He is full of sympathy for these villagers. He is always willing to help them. Last year, this day, we heard almost the same sympathetic assurances from the lips of the Minister then in charge of this subject. All these years the troubles of these villagers are still there. From what I know of the Finance Member's activities before he became an occupant of the Treasury Bench I have no doubt of his willingness to co-operate with the hon. Minister if the Minister is really earnest in this matter of giving relief to villages. I have personal experience of the amount of interest the hon. Finance Member used to take in these matters. Therefore, the whole blame, I regret to have to say, lies at the doors solely and entirely of my hon. Friend the Chief Minister. He himself confessed that he had not yet thought about it, and that there was yet time. There are only a few months more, but nobody knows what the womb of the future has in store for him or for me. We may not be here. Some of us at least may be here. He may not be there to answer. (Hear, hear.) Three years have gone by and we are now in the last days of this Ministry. I request that those whom it may concern will take this matter in hand with the amount of earnestness which it really deserves.

"I shall not reiterate the arguments. Every one is fully aware of the troubles the villagers are put to, especially when there is no road communication to go from place to place. Various villages are not connected even by a single road to the chief town of the taluk and for eight months in the year as our leaders put it, they have to wade through water or through the mire. People have to go for relief to courts of law, for relief in the hospitals, or for other amenities of life in towns and for that they have now to wade through water. The only conveyance available to them is the old-fashioned double-bullock carts which when passing along the ill-maintained roads get into the deep ruts and are stuck up. It is very difficult for these carts to be lifted out of the ruts. That is the miserable condition of the roads in the villages, especially in the deltaic taluks. Everyone knows this, but no one

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is worried about it. It cannot be said that there is no money now and that nobody is aware of these things. Everyone knows these things. What is lacking is earnestness in bringing about an improvement. If only this subject is taken earnestly, I am sure that the necessary amount for this purpose will be forthcoming. I hope the hon. Members of the Treasury Bench will take on hand this subject and give it sympathetic consideration at a very early date."

* Diwan Bahadur P. KESAVA PILLAI:—"Madam, I would like to add one or two remarks to this debate. I am afraid the District Board Presidents are blamed without understanding the situation. The contributions made by the Government are not made regularly and consequently the boards are not sure whether the Government would make any contribution. As a rule, grants are made at the fag end of the year and the boards are not therefore able to utilize them before the end of the year. If the contributions be regular and the boards are sure of their coming every year, I think they will have the required establishment ready for carrying out improvements in the village road communications and spending the amount allotted to them within the official year. I know, as a matter of fact, that most of the taluk boards have got estimates ready when they make application to the district boards and the Government. But as the grants are irregularly made and not in time, they are not able to spend the allotment within the year. Hence the lapses which the hon. the Chief Minister complains of.

"Another point I wish to urge on this occasion is that if the village roads are kept in good condition, there will be less of rural tyranny. In far off villages which are not easily accessible to higher officials—the officers give a wide berth to them and do not go to those places at all—you hear of tyranny by village officials. Also on account of this inaccessibility there is this illicit arrack-making and other unlawful doings. So long as Government do not take steps to improve the village communications, these things will go on. In this respect I do not think the Chief Minister is such a big sinner as he is supposed to be. It was said by my friend, Mr. Anjaneyulu that he has no interest in the improvement of rural communications and that he does not make earnest attempts for improving them. I do not agree with him. I think the hon. the Chief Minister is as earnest as anybody else as he is himself a villager as most of us are. My hon. The Finance Member is rather tightfisted. (Laughter.) He would not give money. He refuses money even to give us Stationary Magistrates in the place of the few Sarish-tadar-Magistrates we have in some districts. Therefore I would blame the hon. the Finance Member and not the Chief Minister for not giving us enough money for the improvement of the rural communication. The Chief Minister might have pleaded for more funds and the hon. the Finance Member might not have agreed. (A voice: Why not he resign?) The hon. the Finance Member before he came into this House used to be sympathetic. But as Finance Member he has become a different man. (Laughter.) I can bear personal testimony to this fact. He was the Settlement Officer in the Cuddapah district. His settlement rates were equitable and just to the ryots and his name is still remembered by the people with gratitude. All subsequent settlements in North Arcot, Chittoor and Chingleput were attended with inequitable enhancement of revenue giving room for undue and continued hardship to the ryots. I know therefore that he is an officer endowed with sympathetic understanding and I only blame him as a hard-hearted Finance

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Member for not giving money for urgent rural needs. I am sure the hon. the Chief Minister, young and energetic as he is, will fight with the Finance Member if necessary and get more money for rural communications."

* The hon. Mr. T. E. MOIR :—"I think it might be almost discourteous to the House if I did not say a few words on this motion from the financial point of view. It might indeed have been difficult to say anything even if the debate had confined itself to the wording of the resolution which in itself is solely concerned with rural communications; it is still more difficult to do so now on account of the fact that the discussion has ranged over a much wider field, both financial and administrative, and has more than once diverged into the much wider subject of what is called a rural development fund. Although the hon. Member from Chittoor was content to put down the improvement of village communications as the first duty of the Government, the list of the first duties of the State was not thereby exhausted because, other hon. Members came forward in turn to say that some other service was the first duty of the Government and so they went on until the hon. Member from Anantapur, Mr. Kesava Pillai suggested, I think, that the improvement of the pay of sarishtadar-magistrates (laughter) was the first duty of the Government."

Diwan Bahadur P. KESAVA PILLAI :—"Madam, may I submit that what I referred to was the abolition of the sarishtadar-magistrates and the employment of stationary magistrates?"

* The hon. Mr. T. E. MOIR :—"I quoted that simply as an example of the difficulties with which the Finance Member or the Finance Minister of to-morrow is or will be faced in dealing with a general resolution or motion of this kind. But of course it is exceedingly useful that opinions and suggestions should be ventilated in this way on an important subject of this kind on the floor of this House. If it is not open to me to give as much satisfaction to some of those who have spoken as I should like, might I remind the House that we have not yet quite finished the discussion of the budget for 1929-30 and that what I am really being invited to do is to frame the budget for 1930-31? One thing at a time, Madam, is my motto. But I may say that when we have got through the discussion of the budget of 1929-30, and the Finance Department have been able to inform my hon. Colleague the Chief Minister of the sums which are available to him as a result of the discussion for distribution in this respect, I shall be able to proceed to the task of considering how to utilize such resources as it seems to me will be available later on? I am afraid, however, Madam, that it is not open to me to take such a plunge into the dark as to forecast here and to-day what the history of the next twelve months will be. I have already disowned or disclaimed any possibility for fore-seeing what exceptional items of expenditure the Government may have to face during the period in which the budget we have been discussing will operate. But I should like, if possible, to contribute a few general observations to the discussions."

The hon. the DEPUTY PRESIDENT :—"The House will now adjourn and re-assemble at half past two."

The House then adjourned for lunch.

After Lunch 2-30 p.m.

* The hon. Mr. T. E. MOIR :—"Mr. President, when the House adjourned for lunch, I was proceeding to offer a few general observations on the motion which is now under discussion. In the first place, I would express my

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entire agreement with some hon. Members who spoke on this question, and without imputing blame to Government it is a fact that communications in this Presidency are not in a satisfactory condition.

"Nor can I pretend that even if Government had much larger resources to devote to communications it could put them all in a proper condition ?

"But whether the constitution of a road fund is a remedy for that is a matter which I think requires very careful consideration.

"Reference was made by one hon. Member to the fact that such a road fund existed in Great Britain. But so far as I am aware when financial difficulties arose it served as a convenient hen-roost for Chancellors of the Exchequer to raid for general purposes. Now assuming such fund to exist in this Presidency, I do not know whether my successor or successors would be able to resist a temptation, which has been too much for the Chancellor of the Exchequer of Great Britain. And when I make these remarks I am not claiming a higher standard of virtue in such matters than my successor or successors may possess. It is merely that I do not see any likelihood of the temptation being put before myself.

"Now, there is one point of importance as regards the road fund in Great Britain, namely, it is constituted out of certain specific taxes imposed on traffic for the purpose of constituting this fund. It is not, I think, a road fund constituted by setting apart general revenues as a special fund. It is, so far as I know now, the result of special taxation upon traffic. Even that I may say has failed to protect it entirely, and much less protection would be available to any fund which was constituted from general revenues, apart from the fact that no Government or Legislative Council could in such matters bind its successor. The general revenues of the province are at the disposal of the Legislative Council year after year. And of course I may add that merely to constitute a fund does not in itself provide an additional rupee of revenue. There are already various special measures of taxation which are imposed on traffic, such as toll fees, licence fees, registration fees. It is a possible subject for investigation to what extent that taxation is actually utilized for the service of communications.

"Again one hon. Member, I think the hon. Member from Chittoor, complained that whereas in the Punjab grants were given to the extent of two-thirds of the cost of the roads in this Presidency only 50 per cent was given. Now, of course, I can understand that any local board which is only concerned with its own needs would welcome an addition to the grants it gets. But clearly, when one board gets a two-thirds grant, that again does not increase the funds available, and it means that some other local body must go with less for the total fixed amount is distributed in the proportions of two-thirds then it is clear that if the total divisible sum remains the same some local boards will get preference and others must go without.

"One hon. Member suggested that such a fund would be a means of helping the poorer boards.

"I am afraid, Sir, my hon. Colleague, the Chief Minister for Education, might not support that suggestion, because if I remember rightly, only one or two days ago, he protested against any such principle being adopted in respect of education, and he expressed his preference for treating all alike irrespective of the question whether one board is richer or poorer than others.

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Obviously, that is an issue which has to be considered in respect of roads as much as in respect of education or any other service. But quite apart from these financial considerations, there are in this matter certain administrative issues which, I think, it would be a very good thing if we were to consider and explore. Now, for my own part, while I am not in a position to give the House any assurance that we can increase the sums which we have been providing year after year for communications—, surely I am right in urging that our expenditure should be with reference to a definite system or policy. My impression is that it is a very haphazard policy which we are at present following. It depends a good deal on the amounts we have to provide for major schemes; it depends on the extent to which in one district as compared with another, village panchayats have been formed, and it depends on the capacity for organization shown by the villagers themselves or by the boards on which they are represented. That is another point which, I think, may very well be examined and considered, whether we cannot improve the system under which these allotments are made.

“There is another very important point, on which for my own part I have no information but which, I think, may be investigated. We have after all been spending considerable sums for the last 4 or 5 years on village communications. Are the communications which have been provided out of those sums, being maintained? It is no use to construct a village road and then allow it in a few years to revert to its original condition. Are local boards providing against that?

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“That is another matter, I think, which might well be investigated. It is perfectly true that, as far as roads are concerned, village roads seem at present to be the most popular cry and to claim most attention. Personally I have no wish to decry the utility of village roads and I have myself suffered many times on account of the bad condition of such roads which one hon. Member Mr. Harisarvottama Rao I think, so eloquently described. In the rainy season I have more than once been held up for several days and unable to move owing to their condition. But surely we ought to retain some sense of proportion as between various classes of roads, whether village, district, or trunk roads. For example, if I were a farmer who has frequently to visit a market six miles away, one mile over a village road and five miles over a taluk or district board road, I think I should prefer to have the five miles of taluk or district board roads in proper condition rather than the one mile village road.

“But the real question with reference to this debate is whether we can do anything now and, before considering the expenditure of more money, I would suggest that we should first ask whether local boards can spend what they have been allotted in the budget for the coming year. There are, I know, complaints that local boards are unable to spend the money allotted to them not owing to their incapacity but because of the late distribution of grants. That is, of course, an issue which presidents of district boards should fight out with the hon. the Chief Minister. But, as far as the current year is concerned, I asked if the figures could be supplied and I find that out of a grant of 7½ lakhs, Rs. 5,60,000 which were due for reallocation out of the unutilized balance were reallocated on the 5th May. It might of course be possible to make such reallocation even earlier provided the district boards concerned supply the necessary information on which reallocation is made as soon as possible after the beginning of the financial year. The allotment for

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[Mr. T. E. Moir]

new works, roughly two lakhs of rupees, was carried out and communicated to the local boards on the 5th of July. Here again I do not think there is much to complain of but it might be possible to effect some improvement. I have no doubt that my hon. Colleague the Chief Minister will consider whether this can be done. I can only hope that, as a result of the interest stimulated by this discussion, any measures taken by my hon. Colleague to give earlier information to the local boards as to the amount placed at their disposal will induce them to show better progress in the coming year.

• “But the general discussion has ranged over a much wider and larger sphere than that of a purely simple road fund. Many references have been made to what has been generally termed rural development, a phrase which would include not only roads but various other activities of local bodies such as water-supply, sanitation, and so on. One hon. Member, I think, also referred to the question of education: but from the financial point of view may I point out that a fund implies continuity. It implies financial resources from which it is constantly recouped. I have, I am afraid, no suggestion to make now as to how we could approach the task of constituting a fund on that basis. Obviously it is impossible to constitute a fund out of a chance windfall. That might to a small extent be done by utilizing a certain sum of money to form what is called an endowment fund which means the investment of a certain sum of money the proceeds of which would be ear-marked for a specific purpose. But even on the most generous computation the proceeds of such an investment in this province would only be a few lakhs and it would be a most questionable expedient to invest a small sum of money to produce a few lakhs of rupees for such various purposes. So far as I know, that is not the idea at the back of the minds of the hon. Members who have spoken. They are under the impression that there is a sum available not required for any other purpose which can be utilized for certain specific items, whether it be roads or schools or wells or sanitation or whatever happens to commend itself to the Legislative Council. Whether any unanimity would be arrived at as to which of these various items should be given priority I am, of course, unable to say; but I doubt if the consideration of that problem is really advanced by suggesting that a certain sum of money should be set apart as a fund. It is quite possible that next year we may be in a position to undertake some special expenditure in respect of services of the kind which may commend itself to the Legislative Council and to expend such sums by placing it at the disposal of the local bodies though in view of the diversity of opinions expressed, clearly there will be a contest as to priority. But I may ask what are the actual facts. We have without a fund been able during the last few years to spend much larger sums than ever before on services which concern rural development and I have not the slightest doubt that such sums as are at our disposal next year, when existing commitments have been met, will mainly go to such services. But the utilization of such surplus, whether it be a crore or less, and its allocation is not advanced, so far as I can see at present, by constituting a road fund or any other fund quite apart from the financial implications of that term. I myself regard certain items connected with rural development with special interest as far as it is open to a Finance Member to do so. I may mention the provision of water-supply, the provision of communications and the provision of elementary education. But it is not possible for me to say now what sums will actually be available, nor will it rest with me to determine how the sum that may become available

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shall be allocated for distribution. I am concerned, however, that expenditure on these items should be carried out with reference to a definite policy and I understand that the hon. the Chief Minister who is largely interested in this problem is contemplating the holding of a conference to consider these matters to which he has been good enough to invite me to attend. I can only say that I shall be very glad to do so and that I shall approach the discussion with as keen a desire for the advancement of those objects which have been referred to and pressed upon our attention by hon. Members of this House as any other member of the conference."

* Mr. K. V. R. SWAMI:—"This is a very simple matter. The only question before the House is whether the rural population can have any portion of the money that can be spared now. Of course as the hon. the Finance Member has stated, the discussion on this question has ranged over the whole question of rural reconstruction. Anyhow the idea seems to be to get money for the improvement of roads. But the hon. the Finance Member says: 'True we have got money; but then there may be some famine next year and the monsoon may fail and am I not to keep this money for that contingency'. He also says "where is the guarantee that, even if the Government grant some moneys, you would maintain those roads." So, he raises so many questions. The hon. the Finance Member took three-fourths of an hour to point out to this House the various difficulties and he also said that he was ready to attend any conference which might be summoned by the hon. the Chief Minister. Of course I must confess that his speech is an able address. This Government, though it poses itself as the trustee of the masses, always stands in opposition to the improvement of the condition of the masses. The policy of the Government is something like that of a miser who thinks that he must hoard his money even by starving his children.

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"There may be famine to-morrow; I cannot understand an argument like that. The hon. the Finance Member asked what would become of this province if a famine would occur. The hon. the Finance Member took care to pay a sum of two crores towards the debt due from this province. If that unfortunate situation overtakes the whole of this province next year, we certainly borrow the required amount and tide over the trouble. Now something should be done to these poor people. The question is, whether these roads can be maintained hereafter, supposing money is given now. If money is allotted for new roads, that amount which is usually spent on new roads year after year will be spent for repairs of old roads. The attitude of this Government is this; if the Justice party supports the Government against all other parties in the House, then they are very good fellows. If they make any substantial proposal for rural reconstruction, they are very bad fellows. The Government will use their votes so long as they are helpful to them. If they make any proposals, as we are doing on this side of the House, they will not be accepted by the Government.

"One point is always forgotten by this Government; they forget that the money belongs to the tax-payer; that is the initial blunder that is committed by this Government; as soon as money is paid, the Government think that it is their own money and they can spend it as they like. As I pointed out more than once, money is spent on towns on a very liberal scale. It is also forgotten that the tax-payer does not get any benefit. It is true that some money is spent for rural purposes. That amount is not enough; that is the

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[Mr. K. V. R. Swami]

opinion of not only one party but of all parties of this House, including my hon. Friend, the Chief Minister. He also feels that something more should be done. But it is apparent that he is not a free man in this respect. So, the hon. the Finance Member says that, if the Chief Minister comes to him with a proper application at the proper time, he would consider the matter sympathetically. The hon. the Finance Member does not think that the hon. the Chief Minister is responsible to this House, that he is not so free as the hon. the Finance Member to defy the wishes of every party in this House, that he has to make concessions and do something in matters of this kind. The opinion of this House on this matter is unanimous. The hon. the Finance Member feels that the Chief Minister is not definite in his proposals. This is no compliment to the hon. the Chief Minister. But we cannot blame the latter; I do not want to say one word against him; this is perhaps a situation created by the present constitution; there are only three Ministers in the Cabinet. There are four other gentlemen who do not care for anybody's opinion except for their pay and their loyalty to each other. This is not a party question at all. All parties say that they want more money for the rural areas. We want money for having roads and for looking after sanitation of the rural areas. Another objection raised is, how much money can be spent on this matter. The idea of the hon. the Finance Member appears to be, supposing we give a sum of six or seven lakhs of rupees as interest on endowment fund, what will be the use; he seems to think that no bread is better than having a little bread. If we have six lakhs of rupees every year, we can do something more. The hon. Member himself admitted that he had been to the Ceded districts and that he suffered very much for want of roads. If this privilege is cut off, the rural population will suffer very much. I therefore support this motion. I hope that all the parties will vote for this motion and strengthen the hands of the hon. the Chief Minister. This motion is not one of no-confidence. I entirely support the motion."

The hon. the PRESIDENT:—"The question is 'to reduce the allotment of Rs. 74,72,600 for grants-in-aid by Rs. 100.'"

The motion was put and declared lost.

Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao demanded a poll and the House divided thus:—

Ayes.

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|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Mr. P. C. Venkatapati Raju. | 18. Mr. K. Uppi Sahib. |
| 2. " K. Koti Reddi. | 19. " C. Marudavanam Pillai. |
| 3. " R. Srinivasa Ayyangar. | 20. " K. V. Krishnaswami Nayakar. |
| 4. " Sawai Venkatachalam Chetti. | 21. " C. Venkatarangam Nayudu. |
| 5. " S. Satyamurti. | 22. " K. S. Sivasubrahmanya Ayyar. |
| 6. " C. V. Venkataramana Ayyangar. | 23. Diwan Bahadur R. N. Arogyaswami Mudaliyar. |
| 7. " G. Harisarvottama Rao. | 24. Mr. K. P. Raman Menon. |
| 8. " C. S. Govindaraja Mudaliyar. | 25. " B. Nagan Gowda. |
| 9. Abdul Hameed Khan Sahib Bahadur. | 26. " B. Ramachandra Reddi. |
| 10. Mr. K. V. R. Swami. | 27. Rao Bahadur C. S. Ratnasabhapati Mudaliyar. |
| 11. " D. Narayana Raju. | 28. Khadir Mohidin Sahib Bahadur, Muhammad. |
| 12. " K. R. Karant. | 29. Rao Bahadur B. Muniswami Nayudu. |
| 13. " P. Anjaneyulu. | 30. " K. Sitarama Reddi. |
| 14. " C. Obi Reddi. | 31. Sriman Biswanath Das Mahasayo, |
| 15. " A. Parasurama Rao Pantulu. | |
| 16. " P. Baktavatsulu Nayudu. | |
| 17. " A. Ranganatha Mudaliyar, | |

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Noes.

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| 1. The hon. Sir Norman Marjoribanks. | 20. Mr. J. Bheemayya. |
| 2. " Khan Bahadur Sir Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur. | 21. " R. Foulkes. |
| 3. " Mr. T. E. Moir. | 22. " P. J. Gnanavaram Pillai. |
| 4. " Diwan Bahadur M. Krishnan Nayar. | 23. Muhammad Schaunad Sahib Bahadur. |
| 5. " Mr. M. R. Seturatnam Ayyar. | 24. Subadar-Major S. A. Nanjappa Bahadur. |
| 6. " Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar. | 25. Mr. K. Krishnan. |
| 7. " Dr. P. Subbarayan. | 26. Rao Sahib L. C. Guruswami. |
| 8. Dr. (Mrs.) S. Muthulakshmi Reddi. | 27. Mr. W. P. A. Soundara Pandia Nadar. |
| 9. Mr. Hilton Brown. | 28. Rao Sahib R. Srinivasan. |
| 10. " H. A. Watson. | 29. Mr. C. E. Wood. |
| 11. " C. A. Souther. | 30. " F. E. James. |
| 12. " S. H. Slater. | 31. " S. N. Dorai Raja. |
| 13. " A. McG. C. Tampoe. | 32. " S. Arpudaswami Udayar. |
| 14. " C. W. E. Cotton. | 33. " H. F. P. Hearson. |
| 15. " V. Ch. John. | 34. Swami A. S. Sahajanandam. |
| 16. " M. A. Manikkavelu Nayar. | 35. Mr. V. Ramjee Rao. |
| 17. Tajudin Sahib Bahadur, Syed. | 36. " T. K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliyar. |
| 18. Mr. C. D. Appavu Chettiyar. | 37. Diwan Bahadur P. C. Ethirajulu Nayudu. |
| 19. " A. B. Shetty. | 38. Khan Bahadur Abdul Razack Sahib Bahadur. |

Ayes 31.

Noes 38.

The motion was lost.

Rao Bahadur B. MUNISWAMI NAYUDU:—"Mr. President, Sir, I move
'To reduce the allotment of Rs. 74,72,600 for Grants-in-aid by Rs. 100'.

"My object is to discuss the policy of the Government in regard to (a) larger grants to trunk roads and second-class roads; (b) additions to trunk roads; and (c) larger grants to village roads and distribution of the same.

"So far as this question is concerned, trunk roads are taken over by the Government and as such they are maintained as a State concern. Therefore the whole cost has to be paid by the State. With regard to second-class roads also, half the cost has to be borne by the Government. This question was raised and fully discussed in connection with financial relations that should exist between the State and the local bodies by the Financial Relations Committee. At page 11 of the report this is how they begin:—"The construction and repair of the great highways of commerce, of the military and pilgrim routes have always been the concern of the State. As early as 1856 the Madras Government decided that trunk roads and certain district roads should be made and kept up at the cost of the State. Later, when, in the course of the discussion of the Local Funds Bill of 1872, complaint was made that it was unjust to throw the maintenance of trunk roads on local funds, the member in charge (Mr. A. J. Arbuthnot) assured the Legislative Council that the immediate object of the Bill was merely to provide additional funds for the construction of cheap roads which should connect villages with district roads."

"The policy of the Government has been that the maintenance of trunk roads and main roads is a State concern and if the local boards collect cesses, it is more for the purpose of constructing cheap roads to connect villages with district roads. That policy was given up subsequently possibly owing to the then financial position of the State. For some years the financial help of the State was withdrawn, and the whole expenditure was met from local funds. Subsequently, in the year 1929-30 the Government

27th March 1929] [Mr. B. Muniswami Nayudu]

recognized their duty to maintain these trunk roads and gave a grant of about 16 lakhs of rupees. This question was considered by this Committee and they say in paragraph 65 of the report:—“A grant equivalent to the whole cost of maintenance of such roads should be made to the local body concerned. The Government have already issued orders accepting such a liability for trunk roads in both local board and municipal areas. We consider that these principles are sound. The grant has been rightly placed on an expenditure basis, and the maximum limit Rs. 500 or Rs. 1,000 is under present conditions, necessary for enforcing economy as well as efficiency in maintenance. The maximum of Rs. 500 or Rs. 1,000 may, however, be enhanced in the case of localities where the maintenance of roads is specially costly.”

“So that the principle laid down by the Report was that the total cost of the maintenance of trunk roads should be met by the State, and having regard to the state of finance at the time, they fixed a maximum of Rs. 500 and they also recognized that where the cost of maintaining the roads is heavy the extra cost must be met by the State. Owing to the state of finance in 1919, a sum of 16 lakhs was allowed at a maximum flat rate of Rs. 500 per district board and a sum of Rs. 1,000 in the case of municipalities. The actual cost of maintaining these roads is however more, because there are places where the actual cost has gone to something like Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 3,000 per mile while the actual amount given is only Rs. 500. I find from the Administration Report for 1926-27 the actual total cost of maintenance of the trunk roads was 17.53 lakhs, while the amount actually given was 15.22 lakhs, so that 2.31 lakhs had been spent from out of the resources of the district boards who have been asked to maintain these roads. Even to maintain these roads in the state in which they are, the local boards have been asked to spend more than 2 lakhs. So far as the roads are concerned, I am thankful to the hon. the Finance Member when he said that the roads are now not in as satisfactory a condition as they should be. The Road Board has distinctly pronounced that most of these roads are not in as efficient a condition as they ought to be, especially when motor traffic and bus traffic is growing for the convenience of the people, so that the cost of the maintenance of these roads are bound to increase in course of time. Every year in the Administration Reports, we find remarks of the Collectors and Superintending Engineers that the roads are not in a satisfactory condition. That is the position so far as the trunk roads are concerned. There was a committee of the Road Board which was constituted in 1921 and they met some time in 1922, I believe. Later on in 1926 the question of adding these trunk roads was considered.

“It was considered at that time that the extra amount that would be required by adding more trunk roads would cost two lakhs more to the district boards and owing to the financial position the question was dropped and the question was eventually turned down in 1926 evidently on the ground that the question was being considered by the Jayakar Committee. Sir, the Jayakar Committee Report had been published and we would certainly soon have the orders of the Government of India on that point. I am only pressing on the Government, that the extra expenditure which is now incurred by the local boards from out of their funds must be morally and legally made good by the Government. If that amount is met by Government, to that extent the local boards will find the where-withal to

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p.m.

[Mr. B. Muniswami Nayudu] [27th March 1929]

attain the real purpose for which they are constituted, that is for the convenience of the villages, not only for the purpose of village communications but also to make sanitary improvements, thereby the Government will be doing their duty by enabling the local boards to expand their activities in regard to the other important services.

“The second point is in regard to second-class roads. The expenditure which the Government should contribute towards these second-class roads was discussed by the Financial Relations Committee and they came to the conclusion that Government should bear an equivalent amount towards the sole cost of the maintenance of these roads. In paragraph 71 of their report they recommend :

‘We recommend (i) that the grant for this class of roads should be equivalent to one-half of the expenditure on maintenance actually incurred, provided that where half the average expenditure in a district exceeds Rs. 200 a mile the grant should be limited to that amount, and (ii) that the present 14 lakhs grant-in-aid of general resources—which now amounts to 17·128 lakhs—should be distributed as a grant for second-class district roads in local board areas.’

“Therefore, that cost of maintenance of the second-class roads by the local boards will come to Rs. 400, the Government paying Rs. 200 and the local boards the other Rs. 200. The Financial Relations Committee have stated :

‘We shall not therefore be wide of the mark if we estimate the total mileage of second-class district roads at 12,000. The grant for 12,000 miles at Rs. 200 a mile will amount to Rs. 24 lakhs, which is 6·72 lakhs more than the amount of the 14 lakhs grant.’

“What is given for second-class roads is 16·90 or 17 lakhs in round figures and if half the grant that is estimated by the Financial Relations Committee is given it will be seven lakhs more which they will have to pay. It will mean that for trunk roads the Government have to pay two lakhs more and for second-class roads seven lakhs more, in all nine lakhs.”

The hon. the PRESIDENT:—“The grant has to be put to vote at 3-25 p.m.”

Rao Bahadur B. MUNISWAMI NAYUDU :—“I have nothing more to add except to say that the Minister will accept the motion.”

Mr. R. NAGAN GOWDA :—“Mr. President, in seconding this cut motion I wish to say that in January 1928 a resolution was passed to the effect that the amounts given to the District Boards of Bellary, Anantapur, Kurnool and Cuddapah had to be given to them to help them to maintain second-class roads. In answer to that resolution the hon. Chief Minister stated that he would consider the resolution favourably and hitherto I do not see any action has been taken on that matter. I think it is only an example of the need for greater grants.”

* The hon. Dr. P. SUBBARAYAN :—“Mr. President, I am afraid I have not got very much time to reply to the points detailed at length by my hon. Friend Mr. Muniswami Nayudu. But, as far as I can see, with regard to these trunk roads, it will be impossible to commit ourselves to more expenditure than at present, because when the Government of India make available to us the funds according to the Report of the Road Development Committee, such funds as are made available will certainly be devoted to trunk roads. In any case, perhaps some more funds will be found which will be available for second-class roads and if some money is realized from the

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[Dr. P. Subbarayan]

"taxes which the Government of India propose to raise extra for these trunk roads, perhaps what we are able to release on account of the trunk roads may be applied to the second-class roads. Beyond that, I am afraid, I cannot go at present."

The motion was put to the House and declared lost.

Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao demanded a poll and the House divided thus:—

Ayes.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Mr. P. C. Venkatapati Raju. | 20. Mr. K. V. Krishnaswami Nayakar. |
| 2. " K. Koti Reddi. | 21. " K. P. V. S. Muhammad Meera |
| 3. " R. Srinivasa Ayyangar. | Ravuttar. |
| 4. " Sami Venkatachalam Chetti. | 22. " C. Venkatarangam Nayudu. |
| 5. " S. Satyamurti. | 23. " K. S. Sivasubrahmanya Ayyar. |
| 6. " C. V. Venkataramana Ayyangar. | 24. " A. Ranganatha Mudaliyar. |
| 7. " G. Harisarvottama Rao. | 25. Diwan Bahadur R. N. Arogyaswami |
| 8. " C. S. Govindaraja Mudaliyar. | Mudaliyar. |
| 9. Abdul Hameed Khan Sahib Bahadur. | 26. Mr. K. P. Raman Menon. |
| 10. Mr. K. V. R. Swami. | 27. " R. Nagan Gowda. |
| 11. " D. Narayana Raja. | 28. " G. Gopala Menon. |
| 12. " K. R. Karant. | 29. " B. Ramachandra Reddi. |
| 13. " P. Anjanavulu. | 30. Rao Bahadur C. S. Ratnasbhapati |
| 14. " C. Obi Reddi. | Mudaliyar. |
| 15. " A. Parasurama Rao. | 31. Mr. G. R. Premayya. |
| 16. " P. Bhaktavatsulu Nayudu. | 32. Rao Bahadur K. Sitarama Reddiyar. |
| 17. Sriman Biswanath Das Mahasayo. | 33. " B. Muniswami Nayudu. |
| 18. Mr. K. Uppi Sahib. | 34. Kumara Raja of Venkatagiri. |
| 19. " C. Marudavanam Pillai. | |

Noes.

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|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. The hon. Sir Norman Macjoribanks. | 41. Subadar-Major S. A. Nanjappah Bahadur. |
| 2. " Khan Bahadur Sir Muhammad | 42. Mr. T. M. Narayanaswami Pillai. |
| Usman Sahib Bahadur. | 43. " K. Krishnan. |
| 3. " Mr. T. E. Moir. | 44. Rao Sahib L. C. Guruswami. |
| 4. " Diwan Bahadur M. Krishnan | 45. Mr. V. I. Muniswami Pillai. |
| Nayar. | 46. " W. P. A. Soundarpaandia Nadar. |
| 5. " Mr. M. R. Seturatnam Ayyar. | 47. " S. Venkiah. |
| 6. " Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar. | 48. Rao Sahib R. Srinivasan. |
| 7. " Dr. P. Subbarayan. | 49. Mr. C. E. Wood. |
| 8. Dr. (Mrs.) S. Mathulakshmi Reddi. | 50. " F. E. James. |
| 9. Mr. Hilton Brown. | 51. " H. F. P. Hearson. |
| 10. " H. A. Watson. | 52. " S. N. Dorai Raja. |
| 11. " C. A. Souter. | 53. " S. Arpudaswami Udayar. |
| 12. " S. H. Slater. | 54. Swami A. S. Sahajanandam. |
| 13. " A. McG. C. Tarapos. | 55. Diwan Bahadur P. C. Ethirajulu Nayudu. |
| 14. " C. W. E. Cotton. | 56. Mr. P. T. Rajan. |
| 15. " V. Ch. John. | 57. " T. K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliyar. |
| 16. " M. A. Manikkavelu Nayakar. | 58. Khan Bahadur Abdul Razaack Sahib |
| 17. Syed Tajuddin Sahib Bahadur. | Bahadur. |
| 18. Mr. A. B. Shetty. | 59. Muhammad Khadir Mohidin Sahib |
| 19. " J. Bheemayya. | Bahadur. |
| 20. " R. Foulkes. | 60. Mr. T. M. Moidoo Sahib. |
| 21. " P. J. Gnanavaram Pillai. | 61. " K. Sarabha Reddi. |
| 22. Mahmud Shammad Sahib Bahadur. | 62. The Zamindar of Mirzapuram. |
| 23. Zamindar of Singampatti. | 63. Mr. A. V. Bhanaji Rao. |

Ayes 34. Noes 46.

The motion was lost.

The demand was then put to the House and adopted, and the grant made.

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DEMAND XXXI—CIVIL WORKS (TRANSFERRED).

3-30
p.m.

* The hon. Mr. M. R. SETURATNAM AYYAR :—“ On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I move,

‘ that the Government be granted a sum not exceeding Rs. 146.07 lakhs for Civil Works—Transferred—under Demand XXXI—Civil Works—Transferred ’ ”

* Diwan Bahadur R. N. AROGYASWAMI MUDALIYAR :—“ Mr. President, I rise, Sir, to move,

‘ that the allotment of Rs. 1,45,28,000 for Civil Works in charge of Public Works officers be reduced by a sum of s. 100.’

“ To discuss the policy of Government. Public Works expenditure, Sir, is almost entirely unremunerative and in view of the fact that money is required for so many purposes of expenditure, I think the time has come for the Government to examine the policy of the department with reference to the question of the construction and maintenance of public buildings. The hon. the Finance Member in presenting the budget for 1929-30 visualised the fact that while our revenues showed no signs of any considerable expansion the expenditure has been gradually going up, and he contemplated the future, considering large demands for expenditure, almost with dismay. If we examine, Sir, the budget provisions for the various departments of Government, such a scrutiny lends strength to the conviction—Members of both sides of this House will agree—that the present expenditure on some departments is inadequate, while possibly there are certain other services where it is possible to reduce the expenditure. The building programme of Government is with reference firstly to the construction of new buildings taking the place of rented buildings, secondly to replace old buildings and thirdly for new schemes which may come about on account of causes like the bifurcation of the Godavari district.

At this stage the hon. the Deputy President took the chair.

“It is not my intention, Madam, to have it understood that the Government should not construct any buildings at all. That is not my intention at all. I think everybody will admit that there are certain classes of buildings which it is necessary for Government to construct when the necessity for such construction arises but my main reason in raising the debate is because I believe firstly that the construction and the maintenance of many classes of buildings have come about as a result of what I may call accidents. Various departments come to the conclusion that they require certain buildings. Of course the Public Works Department merely acts as the agency for putting up those buildings. The only case where the question of expenditure of the buildings is at all considered by the collective Government is when the thing is considered in Cabinet. Even then—it may not be a secret I am revealing—my experience is that nobody cares except the Finance Member and the Member for whose department the building is proposed. The other Members of the Government do not care to bother themselves with the question. By means of this motion I merely want to urge that the whole policy underlying the construction of buildings should be gone into by Government or if possible be referred to a committee of this House. I think it is possible—and I am going to argue the question—that the present expenditure on Civil Works—Transferred, could be reduced. If we look at the budget provisions under this head for a series of years, during the pre-war period, during

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[Mr. R. N. Arogyaswami Mudaliyar]

the war period and during the post-war period, we find that in the pre-war period the expenditure on buildings started to increase. When the war came the Public Works budget had to be cut down severely but if we look at the budget provision made during the post-war period we find again the old phenomenon of the expenditure going up steadily. It must be obvious that on a venture like the construction of new buildings for officers, quarters or for other purposes the expenditure on construction is entirely unremunerative and I think all parties of this House will welcome any proposal that might tend to help Government to secure a policy that might on one side tend to reduce the ever-recurring expenditure and also enable the Government to look for methods by which they could reduce expenditure and enjoy almost the same convenience as they enjoy by the present budget expenditure. At present practically all work is done under departmental supervision either directly by departmental work or by work that is supervised almost in every detail by the officers of the Public Works Department. The practice of employing large contracting firms for carrying out of works was started about four or five years ago and I believe I am right in saying that this practice is now extending. While it was rather difficult four or five years ago to get responsible firms to tender for works of the Public Works Department, I believe I am right in saying that it is now far more easy. I believe that in the current year there are some large works that have been taken up by large contracting firms. But the point I wish to urge is that it is no use employing the slightly altered method of having large contracting firms to execute works without saving expenditure on the establishment. The practice obtaining in other countries of the world in the case of large works is that these contracting firms employ their own expert engineering establishment on the works. The method adopted in this Presidency—as a matter of fact all over India—is that our Government Engineers interfere in everything possible from the very beginning—measurements, preparation of an indefinite series of bills and so on. Secondly I raise the point whether it is necessary that Government in all cases should invest its own capital for construction of buildings and their maintenance also. The expanding programme for construction of buildings means also expanding expenditure both for capital and maintenance. As we go on constructing new buildings the old ones become dilapidated and have got to be renewed again so that the series seems to be never ending. We are committed to an increasing programme of expenditure not merely in the construction and the investment of capital but also we are committed to an increasing programme of expenditure on their maintenance and, as I said, on reconstruction also, so that it seems to me, Madam, it is not worth while examining suggestions to get over this difficulty of having to face the ever-increasing expenditure on public works. I might drop a suggestion which might be considered by Government and that is this. I know from experience that there are many places where private enterprise will be willing to come out and invest capital. There are many places where private people would be willing to put up buildings for residences provided Government give them some sort of guarantee that the buildings will be occupied for a long period. I do not see why except in the case of the highest class of buildings that require the highest class of technical skill some such principle could not be adopted in the case of very many first, second or third class buildings. I should think there are many places in this Presidency where private enterprise will be prepared to invest capital for the construction of

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buildings of this class. And then there is another point that I should like to bring to the notice of this House. We have at present Government Engineers. We have side by side other engineers in practically all districts; the local boards have engineering establishments and there is besides a similar establishment under the Minor Irrigation Department. At present, although the cadre of District Board Engineers has been provincialized these two agencies are working under different bodies. But at the same time it will not be a matter of very great difficulty to come to some sort of arrangement by means of which it will be possible to co-ordinate these two services and if some such scheme is possible, a good deal of expenditure not merely on the establishment but on travelling allowances could be saved, for these two different sets of people are travelling over the same ground. If there is some sort of co-ordination, it cannot be a matter of very great difficulty for either of these bodies to do a considerable amount of work that both are doing at present. In view of these reasons I think it is time that the Government examined the whole policy in this matter with a view firstly to devise the most economical agency for the construction of the buildings and even before they come to a decision on this matter, I should urge the Government to come to a decision once and for all as to the classes and numbers of each class of buildings that they are going to construct. I do not think that any estimate has yet been made of what exactly Government has got to do in the matter of construction of public buildings and within what number of years.

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"It seems to me that the Government are now following a haphazard policy. There is no programme extending for, say a period of twenty or thirty years. The present policy is to send the demands to the departments concerned and it is accepted or rejected according to the state of the finances. We have to meet an ever-increasing expenditure with regard to the construction and maintenance of buildings. I urge for this reason that it is absolutely necessary that expenditure on unproductive departments and unproductive ventures should be kept down at a minimum; and every possible avenue for reducing the capital expenditure, as well as maintenance should be examined. I should be glad if the hon. Minister took the House into his confidence and try to arrive at some sort of definite policy in getting expenditure on civil works reduced to the minimum, the minimum in the matter of capital expenditure and on recurring charges for buildings and establishments. I do not wish to be misunderstood in moving this motion. I do not move this motion as one of censure against Government. If I have spoken at all it is with a view to place before the House my views on this matter. I hope some of the suggestions I have made will be duly considered by Government."

* Mr. C. E. Wood :—"I beg to second this resolution (opposition laughter). True! It may seem strange that I should be joining hands with the hon. Member on the opposite side of the House, and particularly so as until quite a few months ago he was one of those who was so deeply saturated with the traditions of the department that its criticism would have been impossible to him; but to-day he cast off his attachment and no longer do we hear the old cry of 'hands off the Public Works Department.'

"My object in supporting this motion is to make reference to that portion of the hon. the Finance Member's Budget speech in which he pointed out that the Public Works Department had been unable in 1928-29 to spend their allotment by no less than 40 lakhs of rupees and the hon. Member

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gave certain reasons why this under-spending had occurred, the chief reason being delays to works. My hon. friend Mr. Arogyaswami Mudaliyar has referred to one or two reasons responsible for these delays but it seems to me that though this hon. Member was recently in the Public Works Department himself and latterly a minister he has not taken the trouble to study recommendations already made by committees of enquiry relating to these delays. One hon. Member suggested the appointment of a committee. Of what use will that be when there are in existence recommendations, made after careful study and enquiry, which have not been given effect to? My own view is that it is Government rather than the Public Works Department itself which should bear a large part of the blame for the unsatisfactory state of affairs which exists. I ask Government what has been done to carry out the recommendations of the Public Works Reorganization Committee of 1917 and the Public Works Enquiry Committee of 1923? It seems most likely that these reports have been carefully filed, so carefully indeed that it is difficult nowadays to find a copy!

"I will refer to the main factors of delay found by the 1923 Committee.

"The first factor is 'Absence of programme' and on page 4, paragraph 13 of the report, the following remarks appear:—

'All officers of the department have insisted—and on this point the Committee are in agreement with them—that the absence of a programme of works is one of the most material handicaps from which the officers of the department suffer. It is not improbable that it is the existence of this state of affairs that prevents arrangements being made to secure contractors and to collect materials in sufficient time to enable works to be commenced and completed without delay. So long therefore as this handicap continues,—a handicap for which the executive officers of the department are not themselves responsible,—it is unreasonable to expect that pronounced improvements can be made. The Committee therefore recommend that in the case of new works, the time both of commencement and of completion should be fixed and that the amount that is to be allotted for each financial year should be specified before the work is commenced. If this procedure is adopted in the case of new works, the Engineers and contractors of the department will be aware that the suspension of a work in progress will not, under all ordinary circumstances, take place and will be in a position to continue the intensive execution of work.'

"This is a matter for the Minister rather than the department and I ask what Government have done.

• "The second factor is constant alteration by administrative departments, and this is referred to on page 6, paragraph 24 of the report, which says:—

'Officers of the Public Works Department should be authorized to refuse to consider suggestions for alterations unless they are themselves satisfied that they are unnecessary or will not prove a source of delay. These remarks apply particularly to alterations demanded by an administrative department after construction has been commenced.'

"What has Government done to rectify this? To-day I believe the trouble exists quite as much as, if not more than, in 1923. Think of the waste of the time of officers in these circumstances and how disheartening it must be. All is ready for starting on a building and an administrative officer steps in and demands alterations. Think of the cost of re-designing, re-drawing and re-estimating and the waste of time! No wonder that the Public Works Department is 40 lakhs behind-hand in its programme! But the chief factor, in my opinion, which prevents the department from showing any elasticity and responding promptly to increased demands upon it is the absence of outside agency to supplement its own efforts. On pages 20 and 21 of this report the following remarks occur:—

'At present the number of regular contractors and contracting firms available in India for the execution of public works is very limited but we recommend that the policy of Government should be directed to the encouragement of the growth of such a class. With the growth

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of the system it will be possible to secure the employment by contractors of qualified engineers, who will relieve the Government staff of their present executive duties and render necessary the maintenance of only a small inspecting staff, with a permanent clerk of works on each large work or group of works. The existence of the present large subordinate supervising establishment deters reliable firms from tendering for Government works, and even if its status is improved as recommended by us, it is in itself an effective bar to the employment of qualified engineers by contractors.'

"Now what has the department done to encourage contractors? True it has modified the contract forms, K-1, K-2 and the lump sum contract, to make the conditions more attractive and a great step forward has been taken recently in the decision to secure quantity surveyors who will place contractors in a position to know exactly the extent of the work which they propose to undertake, but the department must visualize further than this because the trouble lies with the fact that contractors do not like working directly under Public Works supervising officers. There are various reasons but the main one is the delays occasioned. The contractor is a man to whom time is money, whereas to the salaried supervising officer time is nothing and naturally one cannot be dependent upon the other.

"What is the solution? In my humble opinion the only solution is the delegation by Government of more of its duties to outside agency. I refer to Consulting Engineers and Architects. I will however leave civil works alone and refer only to buildings. What would be the procedure if Government employed independent Consulting Architects? They would ask these Architects for designs; once they had been accepted the Architects would get out drawings, quantities and estimates and, in conjunction with Government, call for tenders. On submission of tenders the contractors would be chosen by Government and the Consulting Architect in co-operation. But the main point is that the contractors would work under the supervision of the Architect and not under that of the department.

"Here we would have the contractor and the Architect, to both of whom 'time is money', endeavouring to push on with the work and to build up a reputation for good and efficient work in order that their services may be required again. Think of the number of operations saved to the department and the elasticity which this would give to them, enabling them to cope with increased programmes without enlargement of staff. I do not suggest that they should give out all their work in this way, but one thing is essential that they should do so regularly in order to support these outside agencies and encourage the creation of more of such agencies. It may be said that these agencies do not exist. They never will exist so long as delays to their work can be occasioned by the supervision of subordinates of a salaried department which cannot realize the importance of time to such people. Once fair opportunities are given I feel sure that independent civil engineers, architects and contractors will appear. The next question is whether these professions and trades are suitable for young Indians of culture and intelligence and I say 'yes! None more so!'

"Most hon. Members will know of Sir Rajendranath Mukerjee of Bengal—the head of one of the largest engineering and industrial firms in Bengal and a man who is held in the very greatest respect by Indians and Europeans alike for his fine character and ability; a man also who has been of great value to Government on many occasions. Sir Rajendranath started as a small contractor and is to-day a capitalist with vast experience.

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"This is the class which India needs to-day for the development of its commerce and industry, and I believe that possibilities exist in the Public Works Department for encouraging the creation of such a class and giving scope for genius and initiative.

"It is for the department to make up its mind to hand over entirely to outside agencies a considerable part of the work which to-day is hampering the normal activities of the department."

* Mr. K. V. R. SWAMI :—"Mr. President, I am very glad to associate myself with this motion, and I never thought that a motion like this would be moved by an experienced gentleman like my hon. Friend Mr. Arogyaswami Mudaliyar. I have carefully listened to the speech of my hon. Friend Mr. Wood, but I could not understand whether he was criticising the Mover or whether he was supporting his motion. He took up only one matter, that is, giving these contracts to other bodies instead of doing it departmentally. That is the only subject dealt with by my hon. Friend Mr. Wood. Of course, he is an expert in that matter and he has got considerable experience and interest to speak about the matter very enthusiastically. He even quoted the opinions given by a committee previously appointed. I am not able to fully support an attitude like that. I am not for giving away all these contracts to outside bodies and make it more expensive for these works to be executed. Now, one thing which was very prominently put by the hon. the Mover is 'why should so much money be wasted on these buildings? Why should they not be satisfied with a lesser expenditure? And if you want to build at all, why not have a programme for about 20 years or 30 years?' It is true that certain departments do want buildings, for instance, the Police. We cannot ask the Police people to spread themselves over the city with one constable here and another constable at another place a mile or two off. I can quite realize it. I can also realize the necessity for buildings for superintendents, inspectors and that sort of people because we want to have a body like that together. We can also understand having some buildings for the Registration department. We want to keep these records safe from catching fire and well protected. But I cannot understand having buildings for every official with a high salary. As has been stated by the hon. the Mover, crores and crores have been invested in buildings and very little remains for other ameliorative work. When I put a question, the Government replied that they were realizing one per cent and odd from these buildings. Perhaps if we take the repairs into consideration, even that won't be realized. You will see, Mr. President, that the expenditure under this head is going up very much and there is no stopping anywhere; it looks like that. For 1927-28 it was only 143 lakhs, but for the next year 1928-29 it went up to 181 lakhs, and for this year (1929-30), it is about 240 lakhs. We have got any amount of money spare why should the same be spent in this department for these buildings. But for other and better purposes, they always are pleading inability to meet the expenditure. What is the sort of expenditure they are meeting? You will see there are separate details given in this book for all sorts of things. They want very costly buildings, structures that would tumble down on account of their own weight. Such buildings they always propose and build. If anybody has got any doubt with regard to this matter I would ask him to look just at the building they are now building for the Small Cause Court within the

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compound of the High Court. The total effect of that building when completed would be that they would have to put up lights even during the day time. That is the nature of buildings produced at a very high cost. The building is being built, and the effect is you have darkness inside the whole buildings. Sometimes, when buildings are really required, they do not desire to observe economy. I will give some instances: the Kistna Central Deputy Tahsildar's office at Nuzvid, for which Rs. 82,000 are required; that is only a very small sum. There is another scheme, namely, the construction of a Revenue Divisional office at Nuzvid at a cost of Rs. 50,000. Another item is construction of a combined Taluk and Stationary Sub-Magistrate's office at Conjeevaram at a cost of Rs. 50,000. There are many more which I need not mention. There is no limit to these. The most funny portion of it is this. They want to construct buildings for officers at places like Coimbatore, Rajahmundry, Chidambaram and other places where the officers can easily secure houses for themselves. There is no meaning in building residential quarters for district judges and sometimes for sub-judges and officers like those who can always get a building in the place for rent. As suggested by the hon. Mover, other people also would build for these officers provided a guarantee is given. This Government do not seem to desire to have less costly buildings constructed at a cheap rate. They want some costly buildings for these officers and the latter feel inconvenience in having to pay ten per cent of their pay as rent. That is no good for them. Officers may not like a building constructed by the Government and their being compelled to live in it. I know at least one instance at Polavaram. They have a building there constructed at a very high cost. The Divisional officer is supposed to live there and he has to pay Rs. 50 or Rs. 100. But he never lives there. He quietly lives in the village proper, and he does not want to live in the Government building at all because the surroundings do not suit him. Therefore this waste ought to be prevented at least in places where buildings can be secured. In such cases where no buildings can be secured we have to satisfy ourselves with a building requiring smaller expenditure. But Government may say 'we are helpless in these matters. We are guided by the Chief Engineer.' But they must give directions to the Chief Engineer that he should not go on with the construction of buildings which are so costly. As it is, unless something is done in this matter as the hon. Mover put it, we do not know where these matters would end. Think what would be the cost of maintenance itself? This year the cost of maintenance is put at a small figure of Rs. 14.99 lakhs. We also find from the figures that nearly 17 lakhs or 18 lakhs are provided for repairs alone. Then the establishment is costing a good bit. Perhaps the idea of the Government is to impress the tourists and strangers with the idea that this country is very wealthy. Otherwise there is no purpose in having these costly buildings. Look at this Law College. Even in those days when England was poor, I do not think they had got buildings of that high value. In a poor country like this, there is no need of wasting money at this rate on these buildings. If it is the intention to impress the American tourists or other strangers with an idea of the wealth of this country on account of these costly buildings, I think it is a failure because after seeing the emaciated creatures inhabiting the country, they will certainly know what straits the people are reduced to on account of this high expenditure. As my hon. Friend put it, it is bound to show up more prominently the poverty of the country. But unfortunately all these buildings are thrust upon my poor

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friend the Development Minister who has nothing to do with the departments. What has he got to do with the Forest department or the Police department or any other department? He is given a portfolio which seems to be too heavy for him and he is asked to reply to all these criticisms. I am afraid he would simply say that these matters would be considered and so on. The responsibility is too heavy for him. If a proper man who knows these things is available in the Ministry, they would not offer this portfolio to him. He may make proposals against the policy that the Government is following. And naturally the Government will not be interested in any such thing. The policy of the Government should be to cut short very much the expenditure under this head and utilize it for better purposes. Wasting two crores and forty lakhs under this head is no good at all. I cannot agree with my hon. Friend Mr. Wood in giving away these contracts to outside firms. It is better to manage these works departmentally. You can manage it cheaper and much better and you can cut your coat according to your cloth.

"If a contract is given, you will be forced to pay the whole amount -15 whether it succeeds or fails. For instance in the Mettur project, they shifted ^{P.M.} the dam after some experience. All these troubles would arise."

* Mr. S. ARPUDASWAMI UDAYAR :—"Mr. President, Sir, I wish to make a few observations with regard to the questions raised by the Mover and seconder. My friend Mr. Arogyaswami Mudaliyar spoke of the absence of a programme. It is unnecessary for me to stress that point, for this is admitted by the Finance Member himself in his speech when he presented the budget. Things are done in a haphazard fashion and large sums of money are being spent on works which are unremunerative. My friend Mr. Swami went too far when he stated that we should not spend money on costly buildings for Judges and Magistrates, that buildings should be put up for them in order to make them really independent, not under any kind of obligation to landholders. My friend Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Chetti asks whether they must have these costly buildings. I am in favour not of costly buildings, but decent ones; but the principle should not be carried too far, as providing buildings for excise inspectors, registrars and District Educational Officers, that is, for all kinds of gazetted officers. There should be some limit. That is the first observation I should like to make.

"Secondly, my hon. friend Mr. Wood referred to the costly schemes like Mettur project. It is unnecessary for me to stress that point, because we have the sorry, sad illustration of this in the case of the Mettur project where the plans were altered and the estimates revised, the latter naturally mounting very high with excess fresh revision. Then, Sir, my friend spoke at some length of giving over to private agencies large works. Mr. Wood also recommended this policy and he hoped that in course of time it would be possible to find in this country large engineering works run by private agencies. Now, that is an ideal. But as matters stand, I think that even those works that have to be done by contractors under the supervision of the department are far from satisfactory. I for one am sceptical of the possibility of these contractors being able to put up large buildings according to the estimates given to them. The Public Works Department have scheduled rates and those rates take into consideration certainly the market rates, be it for cement or steel or any other material. The market rates are there. The estimates are based on scheduled rates which again are based on market rates. Here comes the problem; how is it possible for a contractor to take up the work, 20 or 30 per cent below the estimate of the Public Works Department.

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One principle underlying the policy of the department is to accept the lowest tender. The contractor has to draw the money from the bank; he must have remuneration for his work, for supervision and thirdly and with regard to the market rates he must have some kind of concession to avoid loss. My friend says they are putting up buildings faster and thus they are enabled to make profits. I, for one, fail to understand how they can realize profits, or how the buildings put up can be strong, or consist of good material. Therefore, this question of letting out works on contract is a thing which I will not support. My friend is a professional man and has a great deal of professional experience, but a layman's view in these matters should also be taken into consideration, especially when it is a question of contractors offering to take up work 20 or 30 per cent below the Government estimate. The policy adopted by the Public Works Department of giving these works to the one offering the lowest tender is certainly mystifying. We have seen buildings collapsing suddenly, like a portion of the Public Works Department Secretariat. With regard to contract works entrusted to big firms I should therefore sound a note of alarm.

"With regard to the department changing its mind after the work had been let on contract, with regard to the alterations made by it, I have nothing to say. Such capricious conduct should be discouraged. I am surprised at the extreme views put forward by hon. Members of this House. All that I contend for and all that the Members here must contend for is that large sums of money should not be spent on these unremunerative works, and I should class many of these costly buildings put up for officers under this category. I will not go to the length of saying that Judges and others should not have buildings. But to maintain that every officer or inspector should be provided with accommodation at Government cost will increase the work of the department, the responsibility of the department, its task of maintaining and repairing works of this kind will certainly absorb all the energies of all the officers of the department and they will have hardly time for any other and really productive work."

* Mr. K. KOTI REDDI :—"Madam, Deputy President, I charge this department with extravagance. They have not got a policy of their own. It is one of the departments on which lakhs and lakhs are wasted, and I would show some examples which would convince the House of the utter extravagance of this department. First, my friend Mr. Swami said that whatever necessity there may be for putting up buildings, both for offices and for the residences of officers, the amount of money that is spent is altogether disproportionate to the finances of the country. That is one aspect of it. The second is there are a number of buildings which are absolutely unnecessary in the interests of the public administration and yet you find this Government spending large sums of money on them, when they have not enough money to spend on the vital necessities of this Presidency. It is a fact in which all parties are agreed that one day or other—I believe that day will come sooner than later—this Presidency will attain actual prohibition. That such is the goal there is no dispute; it might be in 10 years or 20 years, but all are agreed that it must come. Even if we cannot attain it in 20 years, we are sure to attain it within 50 years. When such is the case, what use there would be in putting up buildings for Excise officers and offices. Yet we see year after year provision is being made for Excise officers. That is one instance of extravagance on the part of the Government.

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"Another instance is this. It is a fact that in this Presidency serious attempts are made, and it is the goal of many in this Council as well as outside, to see that one day this province is divided into more than one. There is a serious agitation over it and it is a very live issue and the Government have to decide that question in the near future. When such is the case where is the necessity for multiplying buildings in the metropolis. I am pretty sure Madras is not going to be the headquarters of all the provinces then. I do not think that it would even be the headquarters of the Tamil Province. Then take the example of the Small Cause Court buildings. A sum of 6 lakhs is provided for it. It may be put up in the High Court buildings as is done now and there is no necessity for this extravagant expenditure. Again take the example of the building that is now to be provided for office of the Director of Public Instruction. If this province is divided into two, there would be a number of buildings available for offices and officers.

(At this stage the hon. the President took the chair.)

"Again, take the question of reorganization of the Police service. Many of us have been feeling that there is absolutely no justification to have a number of intermediary officers, such as the Circle Inspectors and the Deputy Superintendents of Police. It is hoped that a time will come when one or other of these will go. When that question has not been decided, where is the necessity for putting up buildings for all these people. There are a number of instances I can point where unnecessary expenditure of large sums of money is being incurred."

Mr. P. BHAKTAVATSULU NAYUDU:—"On a point of order, there is no quorum in the House. There are only 27 Members."

The division bell was rung and a few more Members came in.

Mr. K. KOTI REDDI:—"When such is the case, especially when the finances are so tight, when this Government is not able to spend money on useful schemes, I charge the Government with utter recklessness in this matter of spending money on these buildings.

"Coming to the question of providing residences for the officers, there again I say it is absolutely unnecessary to have spent so much money on them.

"I am not one of those who say that provision should not be made at all for building quarters for officers. In some places we know that it is difficult for officers to find proper residences and no objection could be taken for quarters being built there. But even then, Madam, Deputy President, the rent charged does not bear any proportion to the cost of the building occupied. I believe that it would not be more than 2 or 3 per cent of the outlay on the building. It ought to be possible to charge a higher rent and make the buildings pay if not made remunerative. When the officers are paid decent salaries why should they not pay proper rent for the buildings they occupy.

"Another thing is that these buildings very often do not seem to cost more than half the amount shown as spent on them. In the district of Cuddapah a residence has been built for a district officer at a cost of Rupees 69,000. I do not think it appears to cost really more than half that amount. And now, what will it fetch in the shape of rent; I am sure it will not be more than two or three per cent of this Rs. 69,000.

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"Now, though these buildings cost so much, are they at least artistic? Not at all. I am very sorry that most of our buildings built by the Public Works Departments are not at all artistic. Artistic beauty is a thing which has to be borne in mind in constructing buildings at such huge cost.

"With regard to the point raised by Mr. S. Arpudawami Udayar, I wish to say that I am at one with him. The standard rates fixed by the Public Works Department are much higher than what a private contractor would ordinarily charge. This should be looked into. Private enterprise is a thing which has to be encouraged in the construction of at least small buildings and I request that facilities should be given in this respect.

"Madam, in this connexion I wish to say that I am one of those who charge the department with corruption. I believe that in the lower strata, if not in the higher strata of the Public Works Department, there is corruption. That is the reason why these buildings cost more. This should be enquired into.

"One other matter I wish to bring to the notice of the House is this: I am told, Sir, that an attempt is made to use cement flooring instead of the stone flooring in the buildings as was the practice hitherto. Everyone who knows the value and the beauty of the Cuddapah stones would agree with me when I say that this substitution is uneconomical and inartistic. Further, as it is likely to destroy a flourishing industry of the province, it has to be strongly condemned. I trust that instructions will be issued by the Minister to see that Cuddapah slabs are not substituted by cement slabs. With these words I again repeat the charge that in this department the Government is not really doing its duty to this country and that it is spending a lot of money on buildings most of which I believe in the course of a few years would become absolutely useless."

* Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—"Sir, the popular opinion of this department is that it is a Public Waste Department and not Public Works Department. About corruption I do not wish to say anything except that the Government should exercise more vigilance on this the greatest spending department.

"There is one point on which I have some criticism to make and that is this: Sir, in these days of greatly increased vehicular traffic the roads need even greater attention than hitherto. But even the trunk roads are not kept in good condition. Take for instance the road from Mangalore to Mysore by way of Bantwal."

The hon. Mr. M. R. SETURATNAM AYYAR :—"We are now discussing Demand XXXI."

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"Are trunk road grants included in this item?"

The hon. Mr. M. R. SETURATNAM AYYAR :—"Trunk road grants are in Demand XXX, Sir."

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"The hon. Member has lost the chance of speaking on trunk roads. We shall have to leave alone the trunk roads now."

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—"So far as the buildings are concerned . . ."

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"The hon. Member has come to buildings." (Laughter.)

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* Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—"So far as buildings are concerned, I really am not aware what architectural and engineering standards are there in this Presidency. Buildings are constructed without an eye to their architectural beauty. I cannot find any Public Works building in South Kanara with even a pretention to architectural beauty. Secondly, the buildings are very imperfect and defective. In the district court buildings in South Kanara there is a grand dais for the District Judge to sit up and one for the jurors also. But beyond that there is nothing worth mentioning. There is no proper accommodation for jurors. The pleaders have got a small room which is always overcrowded. There is no room to move about or read or do anything of the kind. So far as the witnesses are concerned they have to content themselves with squatting in an old dilapidated shed. In almost all the cutcheries and courts there is no properly constructed urinal at all. Somehow or other Madras people are content to live in these conditions. To my mind; in this matter, they are living in primitive times. Here in the Secretariat it was only after I drew attention to this defect the Government began to above. There was no proper urinal for the clerks. I do not know how they were managing. (Laughter.) They had hitherto put up with all sorts of inconveniences and to run to the beach to answer the calls of nature. I am told now that better arrangements have been made and they have now got some of these comforts. I hope that before long flushing system will be introduced in the urinals.

"Now let us go to the mufassal. Take the Collector's Office. There are so many offices located in one building called the Collector's Office and here the Bench Court is also held. There is hardly a decent public urinal. There is some vacant ground given to them and it is stinking everywhere. My hon. Friend Mr. Souter has experience of this in Mangalore. I believe the same is the case in other parts of Presidency he has been to. (Laughter.) (Mr. Souter : 'I do not know.') That shows how our Collectors are indifferent (loud laughter) to the needs of the people."

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"This is the occasion for the hon. Member to refer to the Executive Engineers."

* Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—"Our Collectors and District Judges ought to know the needs for the people."

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"The hon. Member will be in order if he refers to the conduct of the District Collectors and District Judges in the corresponding demand, Land Revenue and Justice. Here we are only concerned with Executive Engineers."

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—"Because Executive Engineers are expected to do something for the amenities of their subordinates.

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"I do hope that these defects will be remedied.

"I need not dwell much upon the needs of the jurors and assessors. It is a fundamental principle that the jurors and assessors should be given some respect. I hope the hon. the Law Member should see that the Public Works Department does justice to us. With these few words I support the cut motion."

* The hon. Mr. M. R. SETURATNAM AYYAR :—"I was rather surprised to hear from the mover of this motion who is a retired Engineer himself criticizing the policy of the Government. I may say, Sir, that Government

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undertake the construction of buildings of their own for their officers and other institutions such as hospitals, schools and colleges only when suitable private buildings are not available.

"The construction of residential buildings is undertaken only

"(i) when it is the recognized duty or established custom of the Government to provide quarters at Government expense ;

"(ii) when it is necessary on public grounds for the officer to reside on or close to, the premises in which his duties have to be performed such as jail, a police station, a school, a factory, etc. ;

"(iii) when it is necessary to provide residences in parts of the country where no civil station or cantonment exists and where a lengthened term of residence would render camp accommodation unsuitable, e.g., buildings along lines of roads or canals, for the housing of officials employed on their construction or maintenance ;

"(iv) when it is shown to the satisfaction of the Government that suitable house accommodation for officers whose appointments are permanent in respect of locality is not available in a civil station or cantonment already in existence, or is available only under circumstances which will be likely to place such officers in an undesirable position in relation to house proprietors.

"In such circumstances new construction is resorted to only when the alternative of getting suitable private houses on lease is not feasible or is not economical in the long run. When the purchase or new construction of a residence is decided on the Government generally see that the cost thereof is kept as low as possible. At the same time it is also seen that the scale of accommodation supplied is appropriate to the status of the officer for whom the residence is intended.

"One-tenth of the officer's pay is deducted as rent for the house constructed for his occupation.

"With regard to one instance referred to in Pallavaram, whether the officer occupies the bungalow or not 10 per cent of his pay is deducted towards rent for the bungalow and the Government are not losers thereby.

"The works carried out by the Public Works Department are executed either (i) departmentally or (ii) by private agency on the contract system.

"Departmental execution is confined under the rules in the Madras Public Works Department Code to works not costing more than Rs. 10,000 and are generally undertaken only in cases where no reliable contractors are available or where, for other reasons, it is found more economical to carry out the works departmentally than to employ private agency.

"The second method of execution adopted by the Public Works Department is the contract system. Under the Madras Public Works Department Code tenders should invariably be invited for works costing more than Rs. 10,000. There is also a rule that the tenders should be invited in the most open manner possible by publication in the Gazettes and in the local papers and that usually the lowest tender should be accepted, unless there is some objection to the capacity of the tenderer, in which case the most suitable tender should be accepted. There are three kinds of contract in use in the Public Works Department—the piece-work agreement, the schedule contract and the lump sum contract.

"The policy of Government in recent years is to encourage the use of the lump sum and schedule contract systems. With this object they have

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ordered the submission of half-yearly progress reports of all the works given on contract in the previous half-year and in the reviews thereof the Government exhort the Chief Engineer to a more widespread use of the systems.

"Sir, as a matter of fact there is no extravagance in the department for the past few years. Mr. Wood pointed out that with regard to the Public Works Department the recommendations of the Public Works Department Enquiry Committee had not been given effect to. I may say that the main recommendation of the committee with regard to lump sum contract has been given effect to and action is being taken. He said that consulting architects are available and they may be asked to undertake the work of the Government. If it is found advantageous to employ private architects, the Government will be glad to avail themselves of their services.

"In our Presidency we have got one establishment both for irrigation work and civil works. If the building work is entrusted to a consulting architect firm we may have to keep two establishments.

"One other thing that the ex-Minister referred to was that Government had no policy in regard to their expenditure. I am very sorry that my hon. Friend has perhaps forgotten all about the Finance Committee. All the estimates are placed before the Finance Committee and it is only when the Finance Committee has approved of them they are taken before the Council. Important works of an urgent nature are provided for in the budget. The Cabinet alone is not responsible for that but the Finance Committee also is responsible for that. With these few words I move that the Government be granted the sum asked for in this grant."

The motion was put and lost.

The demand was put and carried and the grant made.

DEMAND XXXII—PENSIONS.

The hon. Mr. T. E. MOIR :—"On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I move

'that Government be granted a sum not exceeding 54.79 lakhs under Demand XXXII—Pensions.'

The demand was put and carried and the grant made.

DEMAND XXXIII—STATIONERY.

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—"On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move
that Government be granted a sum not exceeding 18.97 lakhs under Demand XXXIII—Stationery (for Reserved Departments) and Printing.'"

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTI :—"I beg to move

'that the allotment of Rs. 8,61,200 for Government Presses be reduced by Rs. 100.'

"I want to move this motion with a view to discuss the affairs in the Government Press. The affairs in the Government Press are far too serious to ignore. The Superintendent is becoming more and more an auto-crat than an administrator. I would therefore request that a non-official committee be appointed to enquire into the affairs of the Government Press. I therefore move this cut motion."

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Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—" I beg to second this motion. I want just to say one word and that is that the Superintendent is allowed to dismiss his subordinates and there is no appeal for them."

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—" I am in a very difficult situation on account of the fact that nothing has been said by the mover in moving his cut motion and also by seconder. The only thing that the hon. the Mover has stated is that the Superintendent has been giving a lot of trouble to the employees. For the benefit of this House I may say that the Superintendent of the Government Press referred to by my hon. Friends is no longer the present Superintendent. The present Superintendent is Mr. Green and he has inaugurated a policy of great sympathy to the employees. I have come across a great number of employees in the Government Press and they have all told me that their interests are absolutely safe in his hands."

The cut motion was put and declared lost.

A poll was demanded and the House divided thus :—

Ayes.

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| 1. Mr. P. C. Venkatapati Raju. | 13. Mr. P. Anjaneyulu. |
| 2. „ K. Koti Reddi. | 14. „ C. Obi Reddi. |
| 3. „ Sami Venkatachalam Chetti. | 15. „ A. Parasurama Rao. |
| 4. „ S. Satyamurti. | 16. „ P. Bhaktavatsulu Nayudu. |
| 5. „ J. A. Saldanha. | 17. K. Uppi Sahib Bahadur. |
| 6. „ G. Harisarvottama Rao. | 18. Meera Ravuttar Bahadur, K. P. V. S. Muhammad. |
| 7. Basheer Ahmed Sayeed Sahib Bahadur. | 19. Mr. C. Venkatarangam Nayudu. |
| 8. Mr. C. S. Govindaraja Mudaliyar. | 20. „ K. S. Sivasubrahmanya Ayyar. |
| 9. Abdul Hameed Khan Sahib Bahadur. | 21. Diwan Bahadur P. Kesava Pillai. |
| 10. Mr. K. V. R. Swami. | 22. Rao Sahib R. Srinivasan. |
| 11. „ D. Narayana Raju. | |
| 12. „ K. R. Karant. | |

Noes.

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|---|---|
| 1. The hon. Sir Norman Macjoribanks. | 26. Subadar-Major S. A. Nanjappa Bahadur. |
| 2. „ Khan Bahadur Sir Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur. | 27. Rao Bahadur O. M. Narayana Nambudripad. |
| 3. „ Mr. T. E. Moir. | 28. Mr. T. M. Narayanaswami Pillai. |
| 4. „ Diwan Bahadur M. Krishnan Nayar. | 29. „ K. Krishnan. |
| 5. „ Mr. M. R. Seturathnam Ayyar. | 30. Rao Sahib L. C. Guruswami. |
| 6. „ Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar. | 31. Mr. V. I. Muniswami Pillai. |
| 7. „ Dr. P. Subbarayan. | 32. „ W. P. A. Soundara Pandia Nadar. |
| 8. Dr. (Mrs.) S. Muthulakshmi Reddi. | 33. „ C. E. Wood. |
| 9. Mr. Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar. | 34. „ W. O. Wright. |
| 10. „ Hilton Brown. | 35. „ F. E. James. |
| 11. „ H. A. Watson. | 36. „ R. J. C. Robertson. |
| 12. „ O. A. Souter. | 37. „ H. F. P. Hearson. |
| 13. „ S. H. Slater. | 38. „ S. N. Dorai Raja. |
| 14. „ A. McG. C. Tampoe. | 39. „ S. Arpudnaswami Udayar. |
| 15. „ C. W. E. Cotton. | 40. Zamindar of Kallikota. |
| 16. „ V. Ch. John. | 41. Mr. G. R. Premayya. |
| 17. „ M. A. Manikkavelu Nayakar. | 42. Swami A. S. Sahajanandam. |
| 18. Syed Tajudin Sahib Bahadur. | 43. Mr. V. Ramjee Rao. |
| 19. Mr. C. D. Appavu Chettiyar. | 44. „ C. Gopala Menon. |
| 20. „ A. B. Shetty. | 45. „ B. Ramachandra Reddi. |
| 21. „ J. Bheemayya. | 46. Rao Bahadur C. S. Ratnasabhapati Mudaliyar. |
| 22. „ R. Foulkes. | 47. Diwan Bahadur P. C. Ethirajulu Nayudu. |
| 23. „ P. J. Gnanavaram Pillai. | 48. Mr. P. T. Rajan. |
| 24. Mahmud Schammad Sahib Bahadur. | 49. „ T. K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliyar. |
| 25. Zamindar of Singampatti. | |

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Noes—cont.

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| 50. Khan Bahadur S. K. Abdul Razaek Sahib Bahadur. | 53. Mr. K. Sarabha Reddi. |
| 51. Khadir Mohidin Sahib Bahadur, Muhammad. | 54. The Zamindar of Mirzapuram. |
| 52. Khan Sahib T. M. Moidoo Sahib Bahadur. | 55. Kumararaja of Venkatagiri. |
| | 56. Mr. A. V. Bhanaji Rao. |

Neutral.

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| 1. Mr. A. Ranganatha Mudaliyar. | 4. Mr. K. P. Raman Menon. |
| 2. Diwan Bahadur R. N. Arogyaswami Mudaliyar. | 5. The Zamindar of Gollapalli. |
| 3. Mr. Ramanath Goenka. | 6. Mr. R. Nagan Gowda. |
| | 7. Rao Bahadur B. Muniswami Nayudu. |

Ayes 22. Noes 56. Neutral 7.

The motion was lost.

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"I now put the demand to the House; the question is 'that Government be granted a sum not exceeding Rs. 18·97 lakhs under Demand XXXIII. Stationery and Printing'."

The demand was put and carried and the grant was made.

As the time allotted for the discussion of Budget demands had expired 5 p.m. the hon. the President then put the outstanding demands to the vote of the House.

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"The question is 'that Government be granted a sum not exceeding Rs. 3·04 lakhs under Demand XXXIV. Stationery (for Transferred Departments)'."

*The demand was put and carried and the grant was made.

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"The question is that 'Government be granted a sum not exceeding Rs. 32·38 lakhs under Demand XXXV. Agency Tracts'."

The demand was put to vote and carried and the grant was made.

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"The question is that 'Government be granted a sum not exceeding a sum of Rs. 5·17 lakhs under Demand XXXVI. Expenditure in England other than Stores'."

The demand was put and declared lost.

A poll was demanded by the hon. Sir Norman Marjoribanks and the House divided as follows :—

Ayes.

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|---|--|
| 1. The hon. Sir Norman Marjoribanks. | 14. Mr. C. W. E. Cotton. |
| 2. " Khan Bahadur Sir Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur. | 15. " V. Ch. John. |
| 3. " Mr. T. E. Moir. | 16. " M. A. Manikkavelu Nayakar. |
| 4. " Diwan Bahadur M. Krishnan Nayar. | 17. Syed Tajudin Sahib Bahadur. |
| 5. " Mr. M. R. Seturatnam Ayyar. | 18. Mr. C. D. Appava Chettiyar. |
| 6. " Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar. | 19. " A. B. Shetty. |
| 7. " Dr. P. Subbarayan. | 20. " J. Bheemayya. |
| 8. Mr. Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar. | 21. " R. Foulkes. |
| 9. " Hilton Brown. | 22. " P. J. Gnanavaram Pillai. |
| 10. " H. A. Watson. | 23. Mahmud Schamund Sahib Bahadur. |
| 11. " C. A. Souter. | 24. The Zamindar of Singampatti. |
| 12. " S. H. Slater. | 25. Subadar-Major S. A. Nanjappa Bahadur. |
| 13. " A. McG. C. Tampoe. | 26. Rao Bahadur O. M. Narayanan Nambudripad. |
| | 27. Mr. T. M. Narayanaswami Pillai. |

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Ayes—cont

28. Mr. K. Krishnan.
29. Rao Sahib L. C. Guruswami.
30. Mr. V. I. Maniswami Pillai.
31. „ W. P. A. Soundarapandia Nadar.
32. „ S. Venkiah.
33. Rao Sahib R. Srinivasan.
34. Mr. C. E. Wood.
35. „ W. O. Wright.
36. „ F. E. James.
37. „ R. J. C. Robertson.
38. The Zamindar of Kallikota.
39. Mr. H. F. P. Hearson.
40. „ S. N. Dorai Raja.

41. Mr. S. Arpudaswami Udayar.
42. „ G. R. Premayya.
43. Swami A. S. Sahajanandam.
44. Mr. V. Ramjee Rao.
45. „ Ramanath Goenka.
46. „ K. P. Raman Menon.
47. The Zamindar of Gollapalli.
48. Mr. C. Gopala Menon.
49. „ B. Ramachandra Reddi.
50. Rao Bahadur C. S. Ratnasabhapatil Mudaliyar.
51. The Kumararaja of Venkatagiri.

Noes.

1. Diwan Bahadur P. Kesava Pillai.
2. Mr. P. C. Venkatapati Raju.
3. „ K. Koti Reddi.
4. „ Sami Venkatachalam Chetti.
5. „ S. Satyamurti.
6. „ J. A. Saldanha.
7. „ G. Harisarvottama Rao.
8. Basheer Ahmed Sayeed Sahib Bahadur.
9. Mr. C. S. Govindaraja Mudaliyar.
10. „ Abdul Hameed Khan Sahib.
11. „ K. V. R. Swami.

12. Mr. D. Narayana Raju.
13. „ K. R. Karant.
14. „ P. Anjaneyulu.
15. „ C. Obi Reddi.
16. „ A. Parasurama Rao.
17. „ P. Bhaktavatsulu Nayudu.
18. „ K. Uppi Sahib.
19. „ Muhammad Meera Ravuttar.
20. „ C. Venkatarangam Nayudu.
21. „ K. S. Sivasubrahmanya Ayyar.
22. „ K. Sarabha Reddi.

Neutral.

1. Dr. (Mrs.) S. Muthulakshmi Reddi.
2. Diwan Bahadur R. N. Arogyaswami Mudaliyar.
3. Mr. A. Ranganatha Mudaliyar.
4. „ R. Nagan Gowda.
5. Diwan Bahadur P. C. Ethirajulu Nayudu.
6. Mr. P. T. Rajan.

7. Mr. T. K. Chidambaramatha Mudaliyar.
8. „ Abdul Razaq Sahib.
9. „ Khadir Mohidin Sahib.
10. Khan Sahib T. M. Moidoo Sahib Bahadur.
11. Rao Bahadur B. Muniswami Nayudu.
12. The Zamindar of Mirzapuram.
13. Mr. A. V. Bhanoji Rao.

While poll was being taken Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao rose in favour of the motion, and sat down afterwards.

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—“ Hon. Members may change their mind.”
(Laughter)

Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—“ No, Sir, I did not change my mind.”

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—“ Hon. Members may correct their mistakes.”

Ayes 51. Noes 22. Neutral 13.

The demand was carried and the grant made.

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—“ The question is that ‘ Government be granted a sum not exceeding Rs. 67.04 lakhs under Demand XXXVII. Loans and Advances by Provincial Governments ’.”

The demand was put and carried and the grant was made.

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—“ The Council will now wait till His Excellency comes and prorogues the Council.”